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SHOWDOWN IN VIENNA

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THE DEATH OF AUSTRIA

BY MARTIN FUCHS

Translated from the German by
CHARLES HOPE LUMLEY

NEW YORK

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- Kurt von Schuschnigg—Austrian Chancellor
Richard Schmitz—Vice-Chancellor, early Christian-Socialist,
onetime Burgomaster of Vienna
Glaise-Horstenau—Member of Austrian Cabinet, Foreign Office
Guido Schmidt—State Secretary in Austrian Cabinet; confidant
of Schuschnigg
Franz von Papen—German Ambassador to Austria
The Prelate Seipel—Onetime Chancellor; early leader of Chris-
tian-Socialist Party
Prince Starhemberg—Onetime Vice-Chancellor; head of the
Heimwehr
Captain Leopold
Dr. Tavs
Dr. Jury
Professor Menghin
In der Mauer
Lieut.-Fieldmarshal Bardolff
Globotschnig
Konrad Henlein—President of Sudeten German Party
Seyss-Inquart—Vice-President of "German Club"; later a mem-
ber of Austrian Cabinet
Herr Doktor Neubacher—Burgomaster of Vienna
Neustädter-Stürmer—Minister of Security in Austrian Cab-
inet; strong German sympathizer

} Founders of the "Committee of
Seven," pro-Nazi organization in
Vienna

- Skubl—Vienna Police President
 Hornbostel—Political director of the Austrian Foreign Office
 Ludwig—Head of the Press Services in Austria
 Colonel Adam—Onetime general secretary of the Patriotic Front, later head of Press Services
 Wolf—Austrian Ministerial Counsellor, confidant of Schmidt
 Gleissner—Governor of Upper Austria
 Kienboeck—Director of the National Bank of Austria
 Gayda—Italian journalist; considered spokesman for Mussolini
 Major Fey—Leader of National-Socialism in Vienna
 Ernst Karl Winter—Deputy Burgomaster of Vienna
 Jansa—Chief of the Austrian General Staff
 Zernatto—Secretary of the Patriotic Front in Austria
 von Neurath—German Minister of Foreign Affairs
 von Ketteler—von Papen's secretary
 de Kanya—Hungarian Foreign Minister
 Vollgrüber—Austrian Ambassador in Paris
 Marek—Austrian Minister in Prague
 Dr. Schacht—Finance Minister in Germany
 Welczek—German Ambassador in Paris
 Delbos—French Foreign Minister
 François-Poncet—French Ambassador in Berlin
 Tauschitz—Austrian Ambassador in Berlin
 Daranyi—Hungarian Prime Minister
 General Zehner—Secretary of State for Defense in Austria
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 Heinrich Himmler—Chief of the Gestapo
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 von Stein—German Embassy Counsellor in Vienna
 Chautemps—French Prime Minister at time of Berchtesgaden conference
 Colonel Beck—Polish Foreign Minister
 Baron Wiesner—A leader of the Legitimists

SHOWDOWN IN VIENNA

A PACT IS MADE

IT WAS in the autumn of 1935 that the possibilities and prospects of an Austro-German Treaty of Friendship were first openly discussed between the German Ambassador in Vienna, Franz von Papen, and the Austrian Chancellor, Kurt von Schuschnigg. They met at a favorable moment, during the interval of a concert given by the Philharmonic Orchestra to open the winter season. There was not a vacant seat in the large hall of the Concert House in the Lothringerstrasse and public attention was divided between the Chancellor and the conductor, Bruno Walter, who once again was being made the target of a fierce National-Socialist campaign against the "alienization" of the artistic life of Vienna. He was therefore given a special ovation when he mounted the rostrum. This was the first occasion for months on which the head of the Austrian Government had appeared at a public function. He himself was fully aware of the symbolic significance of this event. A spell was broken and a period was ended. In July 1935 a terrible motor accident had robbed him of his wife. For weeks afterwards Kurt von Schuschnigg had gone about as in a dream, incapable of making any decision: the terrible blow had numbed his mind. During the first few days after the accident, the Chancellor had told himself time and time again: "You are a broken man, you no longer have the strength to bear the burden of office or the weight of responsibility. A man who at such a relatively early age feels so terribly weary

and so absolutely sad no longer has the right to allow the fate of a country to depend on his mental alertness." The Chancellor's resignation came very near to being an accomplished fact. Perhaps it was only his great need for rest, his complete exhaustion, which caused him to be incapable of making even this resolution. It was easier to follow the advice of his friends who warned him against making any hasty decision.

Towards the end of the summer, Kurt von Schuschnigg felt that he had recovered from a deep mental crisis. Life began to interest him again, and his post as head of the Government once more had its attractions. Austria's Chancellor, accustomed to analyze his feelings, said to himself with mild astonishment: "So this is what happens when a man is matured by sorrow." Everything suddenly became clearer and simpler. Problems which apparently had no solution, difficulties which had appeared insurmountable, lost their terrors. Kurt von Schuschnigg felt that after the great trial he had been through he was able to undertake every responsibility. He thought that he could even admit to himself that his creative powers had increased. And once again it was his beloved music which unloosed them, which brought about that emotion from which alone great decisions are born.

The significance of the moment and the knowledge that he was surrounded by a happy crowd of vivacious people to whom he was the center of interest and from whom he knew that he received sympathy and respect, made him feel content. Then there were also the feelings aroused by the music itself, Beethoven's glorious *Eroica*, so well known, so often played, yet which always gripped the soul anew; the mastery of the performance by the brilliant orchestra; and the conductor's genius and almost incredible perfection in interpretation. He felt a new sympathy for the world and for mankind, and he was prepared to do his utmost for them.

He and his friends had just finished applauding enthusiastically. The poet Franz Werfel had expressed the people's appreciation of his position in witty, telling words; the Cabinet's Vice-President, Guido Schmidt, had whispered sarcastic com-

ments into the Chancellor's ear on the demeanor of some officials who were obviously feeling a little out of place in this aesthetic atmosphere. And then without emphasis, almost carelessly, he had gone on to talk of politics: fresh intrigues at home, the foreign political bombast of the Vice-Chancellor, Prince Starhemberg, who seemed to be staking his all on the support of Mussolini at a moment when Italy had the whole world against her. The Chancellor was thinking over this last remark when the German Ambassador came towards him through the audience who, whispering excitedly, made way for him.

After having lived for a year in Vienna, Franz von Papen had become accustomed to passages being made for him as soon as he appeared and to happily chatting people changing their tones to excited whispering. The suspicious glances cast at him wherever he went did not trouble him. Actually he was very happy in Austria, although, it is true, he had had to suffer several public affronts. Especially was this the case in Catholic circles, where the "Judas" of the German Center (Catholic) Party was studiously avoided. President Miklas used, wherever possible, to cut His Excellency the Ambassador of the German Reich. When Hitler's special Envoy paid his first official visit to Cardinal Innitzer, the latter could not refrain from reminding him of the speech he had made at Gleiwitz in Upper Silesia when he was Vice-Chancellor of the Reich. In this speech Papen had set himself up as censor of the Austrian Episcopate, whose condemnation of National-Socialism he had characterized as intolerable interference in politics. With somewhat long-winded, heavy theological arguments, the Viennese Archbishop asserted that the Austrian Princes of the Church, when demonstrating against the modern pagan views of National-Socialism, had kept strictly to their religious province and had only fulfilled their duties as ministers to the welfare of those souls entrusted to their care. But at the end of the conversation he caused the German Ambassador to prick up his ears by making a very pointed reference to his ideas on a Greater Germany, expressing the hope of a future union "in better times," when his neighboring countrymen, the Germans in Czechoslovakia, would not be forgotten.

"*Nix fur ungut, Herr Reichskanzler!*" (No offense, Mr. Chancellor) he said as he took leave of his important guest, who stood on the steps of the Archbishop's palace, whistling softly and flourishing his stick in the air.

Gradually the ice was broken: his polished social correctness was in such pleasing contrast with the plebeian manners customary in the governing circles of the Third Reich, the gutter jargon of the National-Socialist politicians, and the uncontrolled outbursts of their Führer. So, gradually, a little more than correctness was to be noticed in the behavior of one or another influential Austrian. Herr von Papen noticed that on occasions sympathetic glances rested on him, the pious worshipper who never failed to attend early mass at St. Stefan's before going for his morning ride. He had recently heard that the punctilious director of the semi-official *Reichspost*, the influential paper of the Christian-Socialists, had stoutly defended him in the Catholic Society of Academicians, declaring heatedly that such a pious man could only be working for the best and could not possibly be treacherous.

No, it would not have been so bad in Vienna if only—the Austrian National-Socialists had not been there, forever demolishing the fine web of Papen diplomacy, with a heavy hand, seeing in the German Ambassador a heaven-sent accomplice in their illegal acts, continually worrying him with naïve requests for financial support and assistance in straightening out their party differences and personal and political intrigues. These people could really ruin the pleasant Viennese atmosphere—they and the official secret police whom the German National-Socialist Party had installed in the Embassy. Herr von Papen knew that he was being closely watched by Berlin, that there was a Papen dossier on the desk of the Gestapo chief, Himmler, and that the blow which on June 30th of the previous year had so to speak missed him by inches, when a bloody harvest had been reaped amongst his colleagues, might be repeated. On that day of the great "cleaning up" of the Third Reich, when in addition to the S.A. leader Röhm and his followers, the so-called reactionaries too were decimated—the former Chancellor, General von

Schleicher, and numerous Conservative politicians being murdered—it was due to chance that the Vice-Chancellor von Papen was not also sacrificed. Two of his secretaries were shot. Franz von Papen knew also of the latent enmity of Goering, the next most powerful man after Hitler, which flared up during a historic sitting of the Reichstag in 1932 and was continued in a bitter fight for the most influential post in the Reich, the Premiership of the Prussian Ministry—a fight which ended in a serious defeat for Papen. Finally he knew that his connections with the Reichswehr, with the old German Nationalist circles, with the industry and high finance of the Third Reich, would all be carefully watched. His appointment as Ambassador to Vienna was a form of refuge for him, to which the Austrian Government had only consented because Prince Schönburg-Hartenstein presented a petition to the Chancellor in the name of the Austrian military nobility, asking that their German colleague be given sanctuary in Vienna.

During the last few days, fresh warnings had come to the former Center Party politician. His Vienna mission had now lasted a year and a quarter, and Hitler was showing distinct signs of impatience at Herr von Papen's lack of success. The slow social advance he was making meant little to the Dictator of the Third Reich, and it meant no more to the professors and industrialists who thronged the anterooms of the German Embassy, or to the Catholic "builders of bridges" between Austria and National-Socialist Germany. The name of von Papen had become a kind of symbol for them, and they had been greatly encouraged by his success at the Vatican crowned by the signing of the Concordat and the Holy See's benevolent attitude in German interests at the time of the plebiscite in the Saar district. Their outlook had not been affected by the fact that the atmosphere in Rome had since markedly changed, or that in Germany a war of culture had begun which left no doubt as to the hostile attitude in leading circles of the Party to the Church and to Christianity. To them it appeared that active Catholic co-operation was the surest way to overcome the "teething troubles" of the totalitarian State.

Herr von Papen did not worry much about the developments of German policy in regard to the Church. He was convinced that these things would settle down when his influence and that of his friends had increased, and Goebbels, Himmler and Rosenberg, the "radical" element in the N.S.D.A.P., had been repressed. Franz von Papen was not one of those people who deliberate whether by any chance their own reckoning may be wrong. Hitler had had his path to power made smooth for him so that the influence of Conservative circles in the State and society might prevail once more. It was a sad necessity then to have to drive out some of those Conservatives to make room in so many posts for the plebeians of the N.S.D.A.P. (the Nazis' full title: National Socialist German Workers' Party). But in the end Germany's élite, the Army, the industrialists of the Rhine and the Ruhr, the noble landed gentry of the East, could not lose. The *détour* must lead to the goal, and it was considered necessary by such brilliant men as Dr. Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, General von Fritsch and great industrialists such as Fritz Thyssen. One should only envisage success and not be disheartened by setbacks. And the success to be achieved was called Austria. It was bad luck that the leaders of the Party had misplayed their highest trump, which the Concordat had dealt to them. If he were able to bring them his latest triumph—the *Anschluss* gained bloodlessly—they would no longer be in a position to look down with proletarian arrogance on the former president of the *Herrenklub*.¹ For everything that had been ruined by the brazen July *putsch* and the murder of Dollfuss had now been very nicely smoothed over once more. Now they would have to take a step forward and obtain some tangible success. The long-delayed run must be taken in order to clear the Schuschnigg hurdle.

* * *

The Austrian Chancellor impulsively held out his hand to the erstwhile Hanoverian Uhlán. In his present mood he felt almost friendly even towards Herr von Papen. Good manners, he thought, never do any harm. He was quite sure that he would

¹ The most exclusive and aristocratic club in Germany.

never let himself be deceived by von Papen. He felt superior in both the diplomatic field and political tactics, although he could not suppress a mild envy of the man's worldly knowledge. Papen, representative of the great German Reich, now stood before him, the Head of the Government of a country which by all glorious tradition was a great Power but which in actual fact had become a weak State dependent on its neighbor.

Herr von Papen expressed his pleasure at seeing the Chancellor in such good health and taking part in public life once more. His pleasure was all the greater because since the sad event of the previous year, the relations between the Empire, which he had the honor to represent, and her kinsman, Austria, had so greatly improved. A year of peace and stabilization must bear fruit. What a pity it was that they always had to face each other armed; it must give such a false impression to the world. He, at any rate, in his position, was a living proof that the Reich did not wish Austria any harm, for he had never made any secret of his sympathies towards a German Austria. He had often asked himself lately whether the moment had not arrived to give the world an example of chivalrous German peace. The regularizing of Austro-German relations, whose official status for a long time had not expressed the real state of affairs, seemed all the more necessary now that the international situation appeared to be very strained. The Abyssinian war, too, made a foreign policy exclusively dependent on Italy much more difficult for Austria. He was convinced that the Chancellor correctly valued the freedom of action which could be ensured by an honest and friendly clarification of relations with Germany. Conflict between Germany and Austria was such an abnormal state of things that it could not be allowed to go on any longer than it would take to correct any misunderstanding. If, might he add, he stood before the Chancellor in this way, entrusted with the entire confidence of the Führer, surely that was a proof that the terms "German" and "National-Socialist" were not inseparable and would have no application in Austria. He had always held the view that nothing could so much assist the clearing up of the internal political situation in Germany and the removal

of certain anti-Catholic views, as a reconciliation between Vienna and Berlin. The Führer himself, whose strong impulses were so well known, would attach the greatest significance to a friendly gesture by his native country. He dared even to say that the hour had possibly arrived for Herr von Schuschnigg, at whose good health and regained vitality he could not adequately express his pleasure, to fulfill a great, historic, and an Austrian, German and European mission. Herr Hitler had offered all the European countries an honest, reciprocal peace pact. It would be an especially happy gesture were Austria to make the first move.

As was his custom, the Chancellor considered the matter before he gave an answer. The silence between the two men lasted for about a minute. Then Herr von Schuschnigg directed a long, piercing glance at the German Ambassador which the latter returned without the flicker of an eyelid, a smile at the corners of his lips. The answer came. The Chancellor spoke, at first hesitatingly with obvious and painstaking care in formulating his sentences, and then with a rush of words. He could only repeat what he and his predecessor, the—sharply emphasized—martyred Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss, had always thought of Austro-German relations and had always put into words on every occasion possible. Austria demanded nothing more than good, very good, friendly and neighborly relations with the German Reich. He was the last person to whom it was necessary to say that Austrians were Germans and that a quarrel between brothers, the two German States, presented an historical anomaly. The blame for the—he hoped—passing clouds over the relationship between Vienna and Berlin, did not lie with Austria. His desire for differences to be settled was just as great as that of the German Ambassador. And if in a time of tension or a delicate international situation, a contribution to European peace were demanded and Austria's initiative could be of value, then there would be no happier man in the world than the Head of the Austrian Government of that day. Of course, there was one primary condition which must be recognized in any negotiations which might take place at any time: Austria's independence

must remain inviolable and her internal politics must be free from any outside interference. Incidentally, he felt bound to rectify a mistake which he noticed had been made by Herr von Papen. Austria's foreign policy was in no way exclusively dependent on a neighboring Power. Austria was grateful to Italy and her Duce for many things and could see in the Rome Protocol system¹ a valuable support for her political and domestic interests. But this gave no reason for stating that Austrian foreign policy was solely based on Rome. Austria wished to live in peace and friendship with all her neighbors and to have no enemies in Europe or the world, but to be the honest friend of all. This was also the reason for Austria remaining in the League of Nations although she did not approve of the policy of sanctions against Italy and could understand that a Power of Germany's importance could serve her interests and world peace from outside the Geneva framework. So much for principles. But since he gathered from the words of the German Ambassador that he thought it possible to put forward a concrete proposal as a basis for discussion of an alliance, he would have to ask first and foremost whether Herr von Papen was voicing his own personal opinion or whether he was acting under instructions from his Government.

Papen replied at once that he had seized the opportunity of this very pleasant encounter and was certainly speaking entirely for himself. Had he been carrying out official orders he would naturally have requested an interview. But he thought that he was quite safe in saying that his words had not gone beyond the views on Austro-German relations of either his immediate Chief, the Foreign Minister Freiherr von Neurath, or the Reichsführer Adolf Hitler. If the Chancellor would permit him he would inform the Wilhelmstrasse, discreetly of course, of today's conversation and would then hope to have a further official discussion on the same theme.

In that case, replied the Chancellor, he would request Herr von Papen to stress in his report the guarantee which he had in-

¹ Agreements between Austria, Italy and Hungary signed in Rome in 1934.

licated as essential to the resumption of normal relations between the two German States. The German Ambassador was then dismissed with a handshake which was a shade more friendly than that exchanged when they met.

Kurt von Schuschnigg's cheerful mood continued throughout the evening. But the gaiety he had assumed before his talk with von Papen had now given way to deep thought. Under the influence of the music which he loved so much, he let his thoughts wander to political alliances, which had been endeavoring to take shape in his brain for some weeks and which had now been directed to a definite channel by the representative of the Reich.

* * *

The anticipated result did not materialize, and on the next few occasions when Herr von Papen met the Chancellor he could barely hide the embarrassment which was so foreign to his nature. He realized that his words had fallen on favorable ground and that the Chancellor was looking forward with a certain amount of impatience to an official German communication. The trusted men, whom Papen with the greatest precautions had wormed into the Government buildings and the personal social circle of the Chancellor, informed him that Schuschnigg proposed unofficially to ascertain the view of the leaders of the Third Reich and also what would be the attitude of the European Cabinets to the regularizing of Austro-German relations.

In Berlin, however, Herr von Papen's dispatch on his conversation in the Concert Hall had been pigeonholed. Highly important matters requiring Hitler's attention had, for once, taken precedence over the Austrian question. The whole world expected that Germany would exploit, by a more active policy in Central Europe, Italy's engagement in East Africa, the collapse of the Stresa front¹ formed in reply to the official announcement of Germany's rearming, and the Anglo-Italian quarrel. Moreover, there was especially grave anxiety about Austria in Rome and the Governments of the Western Powers—anxiety which tended

¹ The co-operation of England, France and Italy in Central European questions, decided at the Conference of April 1935 held at Stresa, Northern Italy.

to prevent the Abyssinian conflict developing towards an irreparable crisis. But Berlin had decided on totally different tactics. To begin with, she would wait and see what happened. For there was always the chance that Mussolini's Abyssinian adventure might lead to war with the Western Powers. Still with too weak an army to risk Germany's very existence by siding with Italy, Hitler, but Hitler alone, nevertheless thought of taking this opportunity of creating a diversion in Central Europe. When, however, it became obvious that the policy of sanctions was failing in its object, that Italy was conquering in East Africa, but would have very great difficulties in exploiting the victory over Abyssinia, then the decision of those in authority at Berlin was quickly made. An advance in Central Europe might arouse the Stresa Powers immediately, and this lay within the bounds of possibility throughout the year 1936. Such action would destroy all hopes of Germany getting any advantage out of the European chaos. And even if Italy were not in a position to maintain a watch on the Brenner Pass¹ at full strength—Berlin had never had a very high opinion of her military efficiency—then France alone was in a position to stop any disturbance of European equilibrium. "First guard the threatened flank," had said the Commander-in-Chief of the Reich Army, General von Fritsch, during a discussion on the risks to be run by an active German policy in Central Europe. And the General had found Hitler in complete agreement. Hitler's thoughts were entirely occupied in an endeavor to find some means whereby he could wrest the military supremacy from the "hereditary enemy," France, whom he hated. The conclusion of the Franco-Russian and Russo-Czechoslovak alliances had caused a feeling almost of despair in Berlin, which had already received a paralyzing shock from Barthou's² security policy. So it was obvious that no unexpected windfall could be hoped for from the Abyssinian war. During the discussion in which it was decided to postpone any plans for Central Europe, Hitler said: "The actions of the Reich in

¹ The Austro-Italian frontier pass.

² Barthou, French Foreign Minister from February to October 1934, when he was assassinated in Marseilles with King Alexander of Yugoslavia.

the immediate future must be directed firstly to keeping alive the differences between Italy and the Western Powers, that is to say, to do nothing which could bring about a reconciliation amongst our former enemies, and secondly to secure some tangible advantage from the situation." When he came out boldly with his plan for obtaining this tangible advantage, the Wilhelmstrasse and the Bendlerstrasse¹ received a first-class shock. He proposed to re-occupy the Rhineland, to follow this immediately by the construction of a German "Maginot line" against France and to give notice of his intention to ignore the Locarno pact. Diplomats and generals implored him not to take this colossal gamble. Events were to show that his view of what the international reaction would be was the more correct. The orders which had been prepared for the German Army to retreat once more, should France take military action against the occupation of the Rhineland, were destroyed a few days later. On the 7th March 1936, France, Germany and Italy behaved exactly as Hitler had expected.

He had been right about another thing also: the effect on Central and South-East Europe. The "resignation" of France, England's hesitation, which was in marked contrast to the action organized from London in regard to Abyssinia and seemed to indicate a complete dropping of British interest in the continent of Europe, and the obvious imminence of a German-Italian entente, created a panic amongst the smaller nations. The example of Poland, which under the guidance of Colonel Beck had sought salvation in an agreement with Berlin and had not come off too badly, suddenly appeared as the great European attraction. Belgium, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Switzerland hurried to copy her example, that is to say, to unhitch their foreign policy from the idea of collective security, from the League of Nations and from orientation on the Western Powers, who had so obviously become incapable of action. The effect on Austria was necessarily catastrophic.

* * *

¹ Where the War Ministry is situated.

Chancellor Schuschnigg was a prey to terrible anxiety during the decisive days of March 1936. In vain did the Italian Ambassador in Vienna, Preziosi, one of Mussolini's most trusted men, and the Press Attaché, Morreale, try to persuade him that the Italian guarantee of Austria's independence had not suffered by the German-Italian entente. He looked forward to the long-postponed visit from the German Ambassador with uneasy tension. March 7th, 1936, had made possible that which so many observers expected after the return of the Saar district to the German Reich through the plebiscite of January 1935: the change of direction of German foreign policy from the West to the East. While the plebiscite struggle was raging in the Saar district, official Austria remained neutral. There had been no lack of attempts to induce her to side with the parties (especially the Catholics) desiring a *status quo*, that is to say, that the Saar should continue temporarily under the League of Nations regime. All such attempts had failed at the Ballhausplatz.¹ Their main argument, which was the general threat by National-Socialist Germany, could not be disputed. But there was thought to be a great difference between the situation in the Saar district which had belonged to Germany up to 1918, and independent Austria. There were numerous papers, in close touch with the Austrian Government, which both before and after the plebiscite expressed the opinion that a return by the Germans in the Saar to their common Fatherland was a welcome solution. In this they were voicing exactly the same nationalist political standpoint as was being used by the supporters of a Greater Germany movement and of the annexation of Austria.

It is true, there was no immediate action taken against Austria after the return of the Saar. The failure of the July rising of 1934 had the same effect on Hitler's Austrian policy as the defeat which he himself suffered on the 9th November 1923 with his Munich *putsch*. This had affected his actions in attempting to seize complete power in Germany for himself. He had proceeded methodically, step by step, to his goal, and had concealed all his violent designs by repeated protestations of loyalty and

¹ Where the Austrian Government offices are situated.

legality. The plebiscite victory in the Saar was followed in March 1935 by the unilateral denunciation of the military clauses of the Versailles agreement, and in March 1936 by the re-militarization of the Rhineland and the repudiation of Germany's obligations under the Locarno pact. Although the ground had been prepared and made ripe for attack by a barrage of propaganda, the drive on Vienna was postponed for the moment, since it seemed useless to rely on outside help and there was too much risk attached to attempting it alone. In the meantime, however, the opponent must be prevented from developing any effective counteraction, especially counterpropaganda, by "legal" alliance. The idea of a "Treaty of Friendship" with Austria, to which Herr von Papen attached so much importance, had been conceived by those responsible for National-Socialist propaganda and foreign politics, on that historic night of the 25th July 1934, when the murder of the Chancellor Dollfuss proved to have been a blunder and the frustration of the Hitler *putsch* in Austria was confirmed.

The catastrophic effect of the events of the 7th March 1936 caused the Chancellor, Kurt von Schuschnigg, to consider the conclusion of such a Treaty of Friendship to be more desirable and more necessary than ever. Filled with the deepest anxiety, he traveled to Rome at the end of March for a conference with the States of the Rome Protocols. He was accompanied by his Foreign Minister Berger-Waldenegg, one of the representatives of the *Heimwehr*¹ in the Austrian Government. Mussolini had called this conference to show the Western Powers that Italy, unharmed by the Abyssinian war and the Mediterranean conflict in Europe, was always in the forefront and that her interest and influence in the area of the Danube had by no means diminished. It was to show London that Italy's encouragement of the German advance against the West did not arise from a feeling of weakness and need, or from a policy of *laissez-faire*, but from carefully-thought-out tactics which in no way endangered Italy's freedom of action. Mussolini would not have been at all

¹ The voluntary army of Christian-Socialists, which became practically an Austrian Fascist association.

displeased had the reinstatement of the Stresa front in London and Paris acted as a counterblast to the policy of sanctions. He tempted and threatened at one and the same time. The Abyssinian war was not yet over; England was making propaganda in Geneva for tightening up sanctions and for the application of an embargo on petroleum. In France, Laval's Cabinet, so friendly to Italy, had fallen, and Sarraut's Government was certainly only awaiting the election to swing right over to the Left. Spain had already established a "People's Front" Government with strong anti-Fascist views. In these circumstances the Italian leader thought it highly advisable to demonstrate, on the one hand, the important European interests with which he had been entrusted on the Danube, and on the other, to prove that the Italian-German friendship need not be wrecked on a difference of opinion on the Austrian question. When the Austrian Chancellor began to ask in carefully selected words what was the opinion of the Head of the Italian Government on the subject of re-establishment of normal relations between Vienna and Berlin, he unloosed a most enthusiastic outburst by the Duce. "I cannot too emphatically advise you to come to terms with Germany. My services are at your disposal. You know that Herr Hitler is already deeply in my debt, he can only emerge from his foreign political isolation with Italy's help. I will see that no harm comes of it. The best thing you can do is to re-establish normal relations with the Third Reich under Italian guarantee. You have just had a drastic demonstration of the weakness of the Western Powers. The gentlemen in London and Paris have not been able to force me to my knees even though they incited the whole world against me. In spite of the screams from semi-official quarters in Paris, the occupation of the Rhineland went off without a hitch. My dear friend, we are witnessing the final crack-up of the West European democracies. Austria's place is at the side of the dynamic Powers. This is how you can best insure your independence."

* * *

He might not have been so enthusiastic had he known the thoughts which had been revolving in the Chancellor's brain for

some months. Kurt von Schuschnigg was no very great friend of Fascist Italy, and the sympathy which had developed so rapidly between his impulsive, temperamental predecessor, Dollfuss, and the Italian Dictator, was almost entirely absent from the quiet, calm Herr von Schuschnigg. The first Schuschnigg-Mussolini conversation, which took place in the autumn of 1934 in Florence, had been very labored. Each conceived an almost instinctive antipathy for the other. Kurt von Schuschnigg did not take kindly to the predominating Italian influence in the Ballhausplatz. He was under no illusions as to the part played by Italy in the co-operation between Rome and Berlin. In the long run she could not help but take the subordinate rôle of a second at a duel. It was inconceivable that Germany could be taken in tow by Italy. "You will see, Hitler will reap what Mussolini has sown" was Schuschnigg's first reaction on hearing of the German-Italian agreement on the subject of international politics. The Austrian Chancellor, although sprung from the not too well defined circle of the officer class during the Hapsburg Monarchy, felt himself a complete Tyrolese and a South Tyrolese at that (he was born at Riva on Lake Garda). The Chancellor was also very well aware of the hostility of various classes of the Austrian people towards the Italian guarantee of Austria's independence.

Amongst all the parties and political groups of Austria, there was only one which was truly "Italian minded": the *Heimwehr*. And the Chancellor thought that an act which would balance Italian influence by the restoration of normal relations with Germany would help him in dealing with the *Heimwehr*. He never had any doubt that the *Heimwehr*, separated as it was from the Christian-Socialists and other civilian circles, only represented an artificial growth on Austrian soil. The *Heimwehr* had principally to thank an internal political situation for their rise to political significance. It was due to the leader of the Christian-Socialist Party and the Prelate Seipel finding it necessary to start a movement working against the Austrian Social-Democrats, which should have a "dynamic" character and an appeal to the feelings of the people. The Prelate Seipel had been Chan-

cellor several times and started this new party very aggressively and with all the most modern means of propaganda, including the intimidation of his opponents in the semi-military organization, the "Schutzbund." But soon the *Heimwehr* took certain steps of which Seipel did not approve. A large part of the movement began to organize itself more on the lines of the foreign, Fascist example than on Austrian tradition. If, in spite of this, Seipel still kept to a coalition with the *Heimwehr*, it was because towards the end of his life (he died in the summer of 1932) certain foreign political motives made this advisable. The Christian-Socialist Party alone was too weak to obtain a majority in parliament-ruled States and thus to seize the government of the country. But the Coalition Parties (under whose direction it worked, owing to the uncompromising opposition tactics of the Social-Democratic Party led by Otto Bauer), the German Party and the *Landbund*,¹ were, so far as foreign policy was concerned, the representatives of a section which did not wish to recognize Austria's independence and its political mission in the Danube Basin. Their sole efforts were directed to arranging a union with the German Reich as soon as possible. This policy found its leader in the person of the Chief of the Vienna police, Schober, who had often been Chancellor. With the then Foreign Minister, Curtius, he worked out in 1931 the well-known Customs Union plan, which had to be dropped owing to the veto by the Western Powers and Italy and also to the decision of the Hague Tribunal. Schober was Seipel's only antagonist in Austria as regards foreign and domestic policy. In addition, during the last years of Seipel's life, he was forced to watch the growing powers of attraction exerted by National-Socialism on the voters who hitherto had been in favor of the German Party and the *Landbund*, and the dazzling of the masses by the National-Socialist ideology. On that account he saw in the *Heimwehr* a counterbalance, both internally and externally, against the German Party and National-Socialism, for the *Heimwehr* movement under the leadership of Prince Star-

¹ A liberal and anti-clerical organization recruited amongst the peasants of the districts of Kärnten and Steiermark.

hemberg was not for Germany but pro-Italian, and could nullify the lure of National-Socialism by the dynamics of Austrian Fascism, in those circles whom the whole European situation was turning towards the attractive idea of a totalitarian anti-Marxism and anti-liberalism.

Seipel's conception was right. After the German and *Landbund* parties had been practically completely absorbed by the National-Socialists, Dollfuss found in the *Heimwehr* a coalition partner which enabled him to envisage the development of Austria from a parliament-ruled democracy to a State ruled on a firm basis whilst carrying through a policy of complete Austrian independence from National-Socialist Germany.

It must be made quite clear that Austria in the first years after the civil war of February 1934, and after the abolition of the parliamentary regime and the prohibition of parties, was ruled by a coalition of Christian-Socialists and the *Heimwehr*, in spite of the apparent political monopoly of what Dollfuss named the Patriotic Front. Its most important representatives in the Government were, on the one side Dollfuss and after him Schuschnigg, and on the other side Prince Starhemberg and Major Fey.

At the moment when Papen had first spoken of the possibility of an Austro-German Treaty of Friendship, Kurt von Schuschnigg had just been thinking of the need finally to free himself from the influence and co-government of the *Heimwehr*. It is true that the Chancellor, with the help of Prince Starhemberg, had put out of action that wing of the *Heimwehr* which had shown itself unreliable in the fight against National-Socialism and whose leader was Major Fey; but the dual rule (which was most clearly expressed in the fact that the Vice-Chancellor, Prince Starhemberg, was leader of the Patriotic Front, while his superior in the Government, Schuschnigg, was only his representative in this politically important organization) continued, with all its embarrassments for the Chancellor. The Prince's impulsive temperament and indiscreet manner, which often led him into making very undiplomatic statements, increased his difficulties. Within the country the *Heimwehr* was generally held

responsible for the events of February. After Major Fey, Prince Starhemberg was the man most hated by the erstwhile Socialist workers. There was a paper called the *Kleine Blatt* which had a wide circulation amongst the working classes. After February 1934, no longer under the auspices of the Social-Democrats but under those of the Young Catholics, it maintained the confidence of its readers and held a circulation of 200,000 copies. But its circulation sank in one day by more than 20,000 copies when it published an article by the Prince which was an attempt at reconciliation. The Chancellor knew of this situation. The social plan of the *Heimwehr* amounted to an organization of society based on a very schematically-conceived corporative idea. For example, it provided for the suppression of the trade unions and their replacement by trade associations, while also the Fascist notion of totalitarianism which the *Heimwehr* brought into political life, aroused vigorous opposition, even from the Catholics. There was constant friction between the *Heimwehr* on the one hand, and on the other the trade unions and the *Freiheitsbund* (alliance of freedom), which had grown out of the Catholic Workers movement. Actually the only benefit from this friction was that derived by National-Socialist propaganda. Warnings against the fascisation of Austria were constantly being given by the theorists of the Catholic-Social program, with whom Schuschnigg, in contrast to his predecessor Dollfuss, frequently exchanged views. These theorists included the Professors of Theology, Messner and Hollensteiner; and Professor Lugmayer, Head of the Vienna Public Education system and author of the so-called "Linzer Program" for the reform of society in the Christian spirit. The Austrian Episcopate, with the social-minded Bishop Gföllner of Linz at its head, spoke very badly of Prince Starhemberg, whose personal conduct was severely criticized in Church circles. And finally the relations between the *Heimwehr* and the second most important man in the State, Burgomaster of Vienna and a leading member of the Patriotic Front, Vice-Chancellor Richard Schmitz, a Christian-Socialist of the old Seipel guard, were about as bad as they could be. Even in the Cabinet there were frequent clashes between Prince Star-

hemberg and the equally temperamental Social Minister, the Graz University Professor Dobretsberger, a Left Catholic, who in turn was at constant warfare with the great *Heimwehr* financier, Mandl, the well-known owner of the Hirtenberg cartridge factory.

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So the Chancellor thought that he had every reason to rid himself of both the *Heimwehr* and Starhemberg, although his relations with the Prince had been most friendly for a long time and were built up on mutual trust. But now foreign political events decided the issue. The cutting-off from Italy, who had in Starhemberg her greatest champion, and the regularizing of relations with National-Socialist Germany, could never be carried out with the Prince in the Government. The possibility of an understanding with Berlin, therefore, immediately offered an opportunity to get rid of his former coalition ally. The basic connection between the Cabinet changes made by Chancellor Schuschnigg in May 1936 and the preparation of an agreement with Germany completely eluded the international student of Austrian politics at that time, although no one could fail to appreciate that Starhemberg's removal was to be taken as a gesture of independence to Italy.

In spite of all considerations against the conclusion of an agreement with Hitler, and in spite of the experience which every domestic and foreign political ally of National-Socialism had had of the merits of this partner to a pact, the decisive factor which governed the Chancellor's passionate desire for a friendly settlement of Austro-German relations was his conception of Austria's duty to the German people. It suffices to read the first chapter of his book *Three Times Austria* in order to understand how strongly Kurt von Schuschnigg felt himself to be a German and could never look on the State entrusted to his leadership as a complete nation by itself. He had never found anything more praiseworthy in his former teachers at the world-famous school "Stella Matutina" in Feldkirch (Vorarlberg), who belonged to the Jesuit Order, than the fact that although driven out of the

Reich they had none of the psychology of the emigrant, but on the contrary showed pronounced German sentiments.

When the agreement with Germany actually took place, the Chancellor received many letters of warning from people, for example, in the Austrian foreign missions. In reply he described Austrian opinion and Austrian tradition as "much too narrow a basis to justify her independence," and the representatives of the "Austria Only" movement in the Catholic circles of his country he called "dangerous idealists." Only in the unrestricted acknowledgment of being Germanic and in taking her place in the world as the second German State could Austria justify her claim to life by the side of the Third Reich. Especially did he suspect those critics of the July agreement in Legitimist circles as having been influenced by the propaganda of German emigrants and French chauvinists.

Kurt von Schuschnigg was a very conscientious Austrian, but he would not confess to himself that this had throughout his life been bound up with a strong inferiority complex towards the Germans. One of the special merits of the projected understanding between Austria and her "big brother in the North" was, he considered, that it would show the National-Socialists that a man could be just as German at heart as they themselves were without acknowledging the Hitler movement, and it would thus take the wind out of their sails. It is interesting to note that the same features are to be found here in Schuschnigg's character as in one who was like him also in other ways—the last Center Party Chancellor of the Reich, Heinrich Bruening, and it was those features which caused the latter to make several mistakes in his domestic and foreign policy. The point of contact between these two is not hard to recognize. After the turn of the century, that is to say during the adolescence of Schuschnigg and Bruening, Austrian Catholicism (as elsewhere throughout Europe) was coming more and more under the influence of the Germans, whose splendid organizing, intellectual and social achievements—the Center Party, People's Association (*Volksverein*) for Catholic Germany, Christian Trade Unions, the Munich-Gladbach School for Catholic Social Poli-

tics—were such that even Roman Cardinals said *Germania docet*, Germany is our teacher. Foreign countries saw how deeply this social German Catholicism had penetrated into Prussian-German life and how closely it was bound up with the ideology of Germany. With few exceptions (Erzberger) the German Center Party¹ was one of the strongest national political props of the State under Wilhelm II. All this glory strongly affected the impressionable years of Kurt von Schuschnigg's life. The post-war development which made the Center the decisive and authoritative party of the Weimar Republic must have strengthened this influence considerably. Schuschnigg himself, the much-sought-after speaker for the Catholics, never grew out of this atmosphere, although the man whom he regarded as his teacher, Prelate Seipel, had, even during the war in a prophetic spirit, pointed out the danger which might accrue from Munich-Gladbach. Just as Bruening failed, so did Schuschnigg, at the decisive moment, fail to see that National-Socialism could only be damned by a criticism of the *Deutschland über alles* ideology and not by competition on the lines of the United Germany slogan.

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At last on the 1st May 1936 the German Ambassador von Papen was able to inform the Austrian Chancellor that he had now received official authority to discuss a Treaty of Friendship. The international situation had in the meantime developed to a point where it appeared possible to the Reich Government, not, it is true, to make an armed attack on Austria, but to stir Germany's Austrian policy into activity and to lay the foundations for an agreement with Austria chiefly by means of counter-propaganda. Both Schuschnigg and Papen were beaming when they parted after a lively conversation. The Chancellor knew perfectly well that the National-Socialists would attempt to make an agreement involving a penetration of Austria. But he considered that he was master of the situation and thought that the only way of hindering Germany from becoming too strong

¹ The Center Party was founded in 1867, and was mainly composed of the Catholic section of the electorate.

politically, lay in concluding an agreement which gave Vienna a firm legal basis which could not easily be ignored. Papen, on his side, realized how difficult it was going to be to come to an agreement which would be acceptable to Hitler, and which at the same time strengthened Austria's sovereignty. The Führer could only be won over to such an arrangement either by having his attention drawn to the prestige to be won for his foreign policy, or else by suggesting the possibility of using the tactics of the Trojan horse against Austria. For months Franz von Papen maintained a sort of shuttle-service between Vienna and Berchtesgaden. Every word of the agreement, every clause, had to be polished. The Austrian Government also insisted on certain economic points of view being recognized. During the period in which Berlin had hoped to bring Austria to her knees by terror and force, the thousand-marks barrier had been instituted—every German traveler to Austria had to pay a special tax of one thousand marks. In practice this amounted to the complete suspension of German tourist traffic, which was the main source of income for the Austrian Alpine resorts. The large hotels and pensions found an alternative source in the stream of visitors from Western Europe and overseas, but the little inns, which were accustomed to live on the German "rucksack" tourists, suffered heavily, and with their peasant suppliers became a hotbed of social disaffection in the country. The organizations of country inns and small industries and, in fact, all purely economic interests, were wholeheartedly with the Chancellor in his desire for an agreement with Germany.

But it was just in economic questions that the German negotiators were most obstinate. The effort to drag in some political advantage for every economic concession, and to draw Austria into the restrictions of German economic life, was unmistakable. Finally, important questions had to be left in the balance and held over for future settlement.

From the very first there was no doubt; the recognition of Austria's sovereignty and the principle of no interference could only be won if Austria agreed to a settlement which excluded Austria's organs of public opinion from the international front

of the critics of the National-Socialist regime, and which in foreign affairs allowed a very wide construction to be put on the conception of Austria's obligations as a German nation. The Chancellor, obstinate so far as internal politics were concerned, and only prepared to agree to a gradual satisfaction of the "ultra national" portion of the population, offered stubborn resistance to all demands which favored the Austrian National-Socialists. He was not to be persuaded to take one of their representatives into the Government. The most he would do would be to grant ministerial posts to "ultra nationals" of the type of Major-General and State Councillor Glaise-Horstenau, who during the war when Head of the Press Department had had connections with German Headquarters and now for some years had been in charge of the Austrian War Archives.

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From the beginning it was clear to the Chancellor that his closest confidant and adviser during these last all-important months, the Vice-Chairman of President Miklas' Cabinet, Dr. Guido Schmidt, would have to be part of the new Government as special guarantor for the Treaty of Friendship between Vienna and Berlin. Even before a friendship had grown up between the two men, Guido Schmidt had become indispensable to the Chancellor. The former Secretary of the Austrian Embassy in Paris had been called into the Cabinet to keep in touch with foreign affairs: that is to say, after having seen all the documents, he had daily to give the President an account of foreign relations. For this position he had to thank Chancellor Seipel, who had taken a liking to the young diplomat on the occasion of his visit to Paris in 1925, and when six years later he required a man he could trust in the entourage of the President, his choice fell on Schmidt. Born in Vorarlberg, Guido Schmidt enjoyed special favor from statesmen also born there, such as the former Chancellor Ender, the creator of the new Constitution. This companionable man with charming ways, who could chat so pleasantly, soon won the affection of President Miklas. So it came about that Guido Schmidt was given a special mission—the liaison between the President and the Govern-

ment. Wilhelm Miklas, Christian-Socialist of the old school, confirmed democrat, pacifist and, above all, representative of organized Catholicism, had been extremely dissatisfied with the development of Austria's domestic policy since the autumn of 1933. In confidential circles he made no secret of his opinion that the experiment of a "Christian Corporative State" was pointless, that he had no sympathy with the dogmatic anti-Marxism of the *Heimwehr* and the Patriotic Front and had a horror of all autocratic methods of rule. Neither Dollfuss nor Schuschnigg found the right path to the psychology of this man. They never succeeded in having a real conversation with him. The President would have given up his high position a long time before had he not been prevented from doing so by a pronounced feeling of responsibility and the conviction that he had been appointed by God to a position which he could not desert—without, at least, making the most use of his far-reaching prerogatives. But in order to deal with Dollfuss and Schuschnigg, who, he realized, were the true rulers of the country, he needed a go-between. It was in this position that Guido Schmidt could show his diplomatic talents. He was there to round off the sharp edges and to make personal contact between the Cabinet and the President tolerable. In those sad weeks after the motor accident and the death of his wife, when he felt so lonely and therefore doubly ready for company, Schuschnigg had found a friend in Guido Schmidt. He remembered with gratitude those hours when this friend relieved him of all the wearying regulations and formalities bound up with the burial of his wife. Since then he had got into the habit of discussing all personal and political worries with Schmidt.

And now they met for a critical examination of the foreign and domestic policy which was bound up with the regularizing of relations with Germany and the discarding of the *Heimwehr*. Happy to have found a kindred soul, Kurt von Schuschnigg did not inquire too closely into the personal motives of his friend's general review of the situation. He certainly never thought that it was based on anything other than purely objective considerations. But there is no doubt that Guido Schmidt saw in this de-

velopment a springboard for himself, one which would propel him to a career of high positions. He had not been able to find this springboard either in Christian-Socialist circles, to which his type must surely have been foreign, or in the *Heimwehr*. To these groups he was an outsider, just as was Franz von Papen to the political Catholicism in Germany—a curious parallel for the two men who were to be so responsible for the tragedy of Austria. Affinity of fate can certainly be mainly explained by affinity of character. It was clear to Guido Schmidt from the first, that the man who was to guide the policy of agreement between Vienna and Berlin to a successful end would have to be one who was influential and indispensable to Austria. He was attracted by having to undertake these special duties and show those talents which he had proved as liaison between the President and two Chancellors of different types, and to show them under certainly very difficult conditions with the self-assured gentlemen of the Third Reich. Guido Schmidt accepted responsibility just as lightly as did Franz von Papen.

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In June 1936, Chancellor Schuschnigg, accompanied by Guido Schmidt, visited the Italian leader Mussolini at his country estate in Rocca della Carminate, to inform him of the forthcoming Austro-German agreement. There is a drive of twenty minutes or half an hour from the aerodrome at Forli to the house. Rocca della Carminate lies in Mussolini's own home district, Romagna, a district of hills formed by the eastern projection of the Apennines. Romagna is a hard country, and as hard as the ground is the character of its inhabitants. The road from Forli to Mussolini's property passes through vineyards, the last stretch through an avenue of cypresses. The Duce has converted an old ruined castle, presented to him by an admirer, into a modern country house, resulting in a curious mixture of styles. A large, very wide gateway leads into a square courtyard, from the further right-hand corner of which rises an old watch-tower. From a bay with two windows one has an unobstructed, wide view over the countryside. The house which Mussolini has built is of simple, straightforward design. In the courtyard there is

an accumulation of monuments and trophies, mostly presents from various Fascist organizations and wartime associations. There are many valuable works of art, amongst them a glorious vase and a piece of sculpture presented to the Duce by the marble workers of the Carrara quarries. But there are also many very ordinary pieces in the collection. The "souvenirs" of the Great War and of the Italian Irredenta in old Austria are noticeable—for the most part captured Austro-Hungarian weapons. A dusty and rusty cannon of large caliber was recognized by the visitors as coming from the Imperial battleship *Viribus Unitis*. "It's curious," whispered Guido Schmidt to the Chancellor, "that he always receives the Austrians here, where we are always reminded of not very pleasant matters. The Germans have never yet been to Rocca." "Of course," replied Schuschnigg, "we have always been looked upon as the hereditary enemies."

Mussolini received his guests in his study—a large room with a huge desk, as in the Palazzo Venezia at Rome, but the imposing emptiness of the room which serves the Duce as a workroom there is missing at Rocca. The room is crammed full of furniture. Innumerable tables, angular and round, and again, on tables and boxes, souvenirs and works of art, the good and the bad all mixed up together. The walls are covered with photographs and pictures, the beautiful face of his daughter Edda recurring repeatedly.

Obviously the Duce was in the best of spirits; he spoke a lot and animatedly, letting a flood of speech flow over his visitors in a mixture of German, French and Italian. His German was broken and one could notice his preference for the French language. To begin with, the beautiful position of the castle and its complete seclusion was discussed. Here the Head of the Italian Government might retire for earnest thought.

"This is my fountain of youth," said the Duce. "Here I am a man, a man and a father," he added with a smile. "Come along, you must see my house." And without any ceremony, he led his guests through the other rooms in the house; there were not many, and they were furnished with strict simplicity. During the tour the guests had an opportunity of meeting Signora

Mussolini, so rarely to be seen, and exchanging a few words on the visit paid by the unfortunate Dollfuss; and then they ended up in the kitchen. The servants seemed quite used to such visits and showed no embarrassment. Dressed in a simple tunic, her feet in sandals, the cook spoke to them without a trace of nervousness. There were several large cars in the courtyard and in one of them lolled a chauffeur with the wireless turned on. He was not in the least disturbed by the formally dressed man who was pacing up and down with nervous steps: the Chief of Protocols, who had met the Austrian guests at the aerodrome and accompanied them to Rocca. Kurt von Schuschnigg could not help thinking that the contrasts must have been cleverly arranged. But the general atmosphere seemed to be gay and free. The members of the family chaffed Mussolini on the speed at which he had driven his car that morning, and how he had frightened the villagers.

They went back into the study, Mussolini still in a splendid mood. He did not fail to point out that Rocca was not to be looked upon as merely a place of rest and recreation but that serious work was also done there. He showed his guests the attractive-looking telephone installation by means of which he could be connected immediately to all the important offices in Rome at any time, a whole battery of buttons which gave contact with the outside world on the slightest touch. "If I come here and Rome says that I cannot be reached, it means that I don't want to be reached," he said, laughing. "For my Viennese friends I am always to be reached, especially if an hour of danger were to arrive. But you know that I don't think that will happen." And then he went straight on to speak of world conditions. It was quite obvious that he felt himself a conqueror and that he hoped very soon to come to some advantageous arrangement with the Western Powers, particularly England. Rumors which suggested that he was "tacking on" to Hitler were therefore without foundation. The Chancellor deemed the moment to have arrived to begin his grand opening speech. The Duce would share his pleasure at the news he brought. At last the Austro-German Treaty of Friendship seemed assured. It was to be on a

basis of a formal guarantee by the German Reich of the independence and sovereignty of Austria, that was to say, on the principle of no intervention by Germany or the German National-Socialist Party in Austrian domestic policy, and on the other hand it would emphasize the co-operation and solidarity of the two German States in foreign affairs. Thus the common interests between Germany and Italy, so plainly shown in the last few months, had been borne in mind and the completion of the Rome Protocol system reached by means of this agreement with the German Reich. The European balance of power would be restored by the removal of an unnatural tension in Central Europe, the preponderance of the Western Powers would be reduced and the danger of Communist Russia gaining influence on the course of events nullified. There was no need to tell the Duce that this danger was very real in view of the People's Front regime in France and Spain. Now Italy would be able to look after her interests in East Africa and the Mediterranean with increased strength. He hoped, at least, that the relief of the Brenner situation would be noticeable and lasting. Needless to say the Austrian Government had stressed during the discussions that the Rome Protocols should be kept intact. When the agreement came to be published this would be worded in appropriate form. Whilst in this, what one might call solemn hour, he wished to express his heartfelt thanks to the Head of the Italian Government for the valuable assistance which he had given to Austria in the policy of guarding her independence, he must nevertheless emphasize that this assistance would also be necessary in the future. He was certainly not saying anything which was not known when he suggested that so far as the partner was concerned with whom he hoped to unite, a certain care appeared to be necessary both before and afterwards, for naturally he was under no illusions that he had succeeded in making National-Socialism give up the idea of capturing Austria. Quoting the words used by the Duce in March, he wanted the forthcoming agreement to be essentially a regularizing of Austro-German relations under Italian guarantee.

The Chancellor expected a joyful outburst such as greeted his

first suggestion of an alliance between Vienna and Berlin. But Mussolini's reaction was by no means so unequivocal as his Viennese guests anticipated. Whilst Schuschnigg was speaking a curious change seemed to come over the Duce. The eyes which in the presence of visitors on whom Mussolini wished to make a strong impression usually flashed and were filled with energy, had become veiled; his chin, previously pushed forward, had now sunk; his features which before had been so keen and tense, had relaxed. An intense fatigue seemed to have come over the Italian Dictator. It is true that he tried not to let the Chancellor see that he had not brought very pleasant news and that the agreement between Berlin and Vienna, which he had welcomed in March as a means of bringing pressure on the Western Powers, did not appear so urgent today. For in his opinion he was about to conclude a favorable understanding with England, and was convinced that with a reference to Austria and the need for defense of the Brenner Pass he would be able to get greater concessions and readiness to come to terms. The raising of sanctions was a *fait accompli*, as also was the termination of the precautions taken in the Mediterranean, particularly by Great Britain, amongst them the pact against Italy with the border States of the East Mediterranean. The feeling of the Cabinets in London, Paris and Brussels seemed to tend towards the conclusion of a new Locarno treaty which, Mussolini considered, might result in a fresh four-power pact, that is, a Great Power directorate in Europe. If now London and Paris got the idea that Italy was no longer needed as a counterbalance to Germany in Central Europe, then his chances were greatly diminished. And so far as Germany was concerned he had thought that a settlement of relations between Vienna and Berlin would need the help of an Italian act of mediation. He had never envisaged direct action between the two German States.

But Mussolini knew that there was no question of any possibility of a protest by Italy against the proposed agreement. This would have occasioned a situation in which he would have lost that friendship of Germany so indispensable at the moment as a lever on the Western Powers and the League of Nations.

Further, he would probably be forced to take up some protective action on Austria's behalf. The Stresa front would then have to be formed once more without any chance of Italy getting anything out of a friendship with the Western Powers.

So the only thing to do was to put the best face possible on a situation which could not be avoided. During the last few days, the Duce had been torn between the two questions: whether his foreign policy should stress co-operation with London and Paris, or whether he should continue his somewhat dangerous flirtation with Hitler. Schuschnigg's policy did not make the answer any easier but rather forced him into a friendship with Berlin. Mussolini was furious with himself for having said what he had to the Austrian Chancellor in March. He had presumed too much on the cunning of Italian diplomacy. This Alpine lawyer was certainly no successor to Metternich.

The Duce pulled himself together with an obvious effort. His eyes, rolling and opened wide, blazed once again. But his first words sounded very bittersweet. Italy had never interfered with the conduct of Austrian foreign politics and, above all, had never presumed to define how Berlin and Vienna should deal with their *modus vivendi*. He considered himself exceptionally fortunate that Italy had been able to render some trifling services to her friend Austria and was delighted at the repeated recognition of this state of affairs by the Chancellor. A clearing up of the difficulties between Vienna and Berlin was certainly in the interests of European peace; he himself could not say how far Austria could go in this direction without endangering her independence. He knew the dynamics of National-Socialism, a movement formed in the image of Fascism in its ideology and organization. He learned with pleasure that the proposed Austro-German agreement acknowledged the Rome Protocol system. Naturally, in view of the obligations assumed by the participants in this system, he laid a certain amount of importance on learning the details of this suggested agreement between Austria and Germany.

As the conversation went on at Rocca della Carminate, Mussolini regained his good humor and his optimistic views of the

Italian possibilities in the matter. Again he proved that not only was he a hard worker but also an extremely capable one. It was no empty phrase used by Schuschnigg when later he sent a telegram to Mussolini on the signing of the Austro-German agreement, thanking him for the repeated and valuable conversations they had had at Rocca della Carminate.

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Meanwhile Herr von Papen had to live through a few more trying hours. The more matters advanced, the harder did he find it to persuade Hitler of the necessity of the agreement and the more obstinate did Schuschnigg become, having been stiffened by the conversation at Rocca della Carminate. The German Ambassador in Vienna had to explain to the Austrian Chancellor again and again that this was the last opportunity to obtain a favorable pact with Hitler whereby the sovereignty of Austria and the disowning of the Austrian Nazis would be assured. Again and again did he have to set before the Führer the advantages involved in Austria's recognition of a common German policy. Once this agreement was made, the Austrian Government would find it difficult to play the rest of Europe against the German Reich. Were Schuschnigg not to be given his agreement he would certainly look round for other guarantees, and possibly carry through a Restoration to which neither Italy nor the Western Powers would have any objection and which only Jugoslavia of the Little Entente would oppose.

Papen was able to work on Vienna with the certainty of England's attitude. She had plainly expressed the wish for a rapprochement with Germany and would surely willingly pay for a definite guarantee of peace with the Third Reich by means of concessions in Central Europe. When Papen brought up this argument, the Chancellor was reminded of a conversation he had had in the spring with a prominent British visitor, Sir Austen Chamberlain, a former Foreign Minister. This statesman had earnestly advised him not to lose sight of the possibilities of an understanding with Berlin. Schuschnigg knew quite well that British diplomacy reckoned on the German-Italian coldness on Austria's account as an axiom, and that their tactics were based

on this (which, incidentally, supported by Central European statesmen of note such as President Benes, was still reckoned on even after the official proclamation of the Rome-Berlin Axis right up to Austria's last days). But on the other hand London would have liked to see Mussolini's constant lever on the Western Powers, the defense of the Brenner Pass, weakened by a pact between Vienna and Berlin.

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On the 8th July 1936 the Austrian Government seized some foreign newspapers wherein it was stated that the Austro-German conversations had been broken off as ineffectual (a *ballon d'essai* from Berlin?). On the afternoon of the same day the Chancellor summoned some of his closest colleagues to a room in the Ballhausplatz. Among them were the Burgomaster of Vienna, Richard Schmitz, the Director of the Political Section of the Austrian Foreign office, Hornbostel, the Chief of the Press Services, Ludwig, the General Secretary of the Patriotic Front, Colonel Adam, and the Vice-Director of the Cabinet, Guido Schmidt. At this meeting Schuschnigg gave the first official announcement of the impending conclusion of an agreement with the Third Reich. A circular letter from the Chancellor's office to Austria's foreign representatives was the result. In this confidential letter No. 40.118-13,¹ great importance was attached to the agreement, but it was implied that the content was perfectly harmless. The premises for the conclusion of the agreement were: the clear and undoubted recognition of the independence of Austria, the recognition of a basis of non-intervention in the affairs of the Austrian State and express reference to the fact that the Rome Protocols of the year 1934, with the supplements of 1936, are the basis of Austrian politics and that this cannot be altered. Finally it is clearly established that National-Socialism for Austria does not enter into the question either as a political factor or as a party to the agreement. With the fulfilment of these premises, a series of measures was to be taken to relieve any tension between the two countries. The organizations of the Press, radio, film and the-

¹ See Appendix, p. 283.

atrical industries, the activities of the German or Austrian colonies in each country, the liquidation of the National-Socialist emigrant group in Germany, freeing Austrian trade through Germany from political interference, gradually facilitating tourist traffic, were among the measures enumerated. There was no question of a domestic political pact with National-Socialism. The political amnesty must be recognized by everyone as necessary, particularly by the Social-Democrats, to whom at Christmas 1935 a far-reaching amnesty was granted. The drawing of the so-called "National circles" into a share of responsibility was mentioned, in so far as they were not compromised with National-Socialism and stood on the platform of the Patriotic Front. There was to be no change in the administrative departments, or at the most the addition of one or more members to the Cabinet. Treason to the State would be just as severely punished as up to the present. To make this quite clear, a law for the protection of the State would be published at the same time as the Treaty of Friendship. So that, on the whole, nothing more was to be expected than a valuable contribution to the alleviation of the tension and unrest of Europe in general.

From this confidential circular letter may be seen the optimism which reigned in the Ballhausplatz. All that Austria's ambassadors in foreign countries could see as a set-off to be made by Austria for the formal recognition of her independence and sovereignty by Hitler-Germany, was an amnesty to those National-Socialists who might be in prison. In the advance statement no mention was made of the political declaration by Austria of her character as a German State.

* * *

Once again a meeting under the chairmanship of Schuschnigg took place in the Chancellor's office, this time on the evening of the 9th July. The circle of those attending was slightly larger than before and included the leading personages in the Press Service, the official Information Bureau and the *Heimatdienst*.¹ Austria's propaganda services should make preparations for, as the Chancellor put it, "meeting strong opposing forces

¹ The service for propaganda within the country.

which will be mobilized against the Treaty both at home and in foreign countries." Schuschnigg was already being irritated by such forces. A few days earlier he had talked with the Deputy Burgomaster of Vienna, Ernst Karl Winter, a personal friend but a severe critic of the policy instituted in February 1934. Winter represented in New Austria a sort of legalized opposition. Dollfuss and later Schuschnigg used him as an animate conscience, so to speak, who had to put forward all points against the various steps to be taken in politics but whose influence was nil. Ernst Karl Winter was a very erudite man—a historian—and thoroughly reliable. Originally a Conservative and confirmed follower of the old Austrian tradition, a Legitimist of the first water, he was forced right over to the Left on the arrival of the Fascist movement, that is to say on the founding of the Third Reich. During the last months before the events of February he was on the side of the Social-Democratic leaders, in keen opposition to the *Heimwehr* influence and the policy introduced by Dollfuss. His appointment to the post of Deputy Burgomaster of Vienna was a sop to the working classes forced into opposition that February. Thus Winter was fulfilling a social political mission. He himself saw it as a political problem: The working classes must gradually win for themselves political representation. Winter's steps in this direction, strongly opposed by the illegal Social-Democratic party leadership, failed everywhere. He did not even reach practical social political success because an impossible personal relationship had grown up between him and the Burgomaster Richard Schmitz from the very first days of his official duties in the Vienna Town Hall. Schmitz looked on Winter as a particularly unsympathetic type of political outsider. So the position of Deputy Burgomaster of Vienna had become practically pointless. Winter's activities were employed as a political publicist, with limited possibilities, in his many political journeys to foreign countries, on which he used to report to the heads of his Government and which were sequels to his talks with the Chancellor. When Schuschnigg had spoken of the possibility of an agreement with Germany, Winter had flown into a passion. He spoke some very hard words. A betrayal

of Austria's mission, of Europe, of the Catholic cause, were some of the things of which he accused the Chancellor. "You're trying to act a Papen part," he added, and prophesied a catastrophic effect on the Austrian people who so loved their fatherland, and also on foreign countries. Schuschnigg called Winter a political Utopian. The conversation was becoming somewhat bitter. The Chancellor knew that Winter was busy on a brochure opposing the Treaty of Friendship with Germany under Italian guarantee, and proposing in its stead a European orientation of Austria supported by the Western Powers, and at home a reconciliation with the Left as a step towards a Restoration and the institution of a social monarchy. The Chancellor armed himself against this still invisible critic with the argument which he put forward at the conference of the 9th July. He said that a satisfactory agreement with the Third Reich should be made, especially with regard to the continuity of Austrian politics, and they should allow themselves to be influenced by the repeated attempts to this end made by Dollfuss. "Austria," he declared, "has always emphasized its position as a German State—and this may be seen from the various remarks made by the late Chancellor Dollfuss. Austrian foreign policy will also in the future always bear in mind that it considers itself a German State and will conform with the foreign aims of the Government of the German Reich so long as these are directed towards the preservation of peace." Discussions on home affairs then followed, in very much the same strain as the information sent to the Austrian Embassies abroad. But the consequences of the agreement on foreign policy, which was to be the origin of so many quarrels, were only discussed amongst the very closest colleagues. "So long as these are directed towards the preservation of peace"—with these words the Chancellor believed he had safeguarded his complete freedom of action.

The Press campaign which had to be undertaken was the next point discussed. Now it was Guido Schmidt who had something to say. The Press should not be allowed to write exactly the same words and so let the impression get about that public opinion was being guided officially into the same channels. Let the offi-

cial and semi-official organs, the Press Service, the political correspondent of the Foreign Office, the *Wiener Zeitung* and possibly the *Reichspost*, represent the Government's standpoint as it had been given to them here. But it would do no harm if the Liberal-Radical Press showed no love for it and even wrote rather skeptically. Let them quietly stress that only success could decide. A few of the Legitimist papers could say that the Treaty of Friendship with Berlin leaves the question of the form of Austria's government quite untouched as it is purely a domestic question. Other papers, notably those in the provinces, could emphasize the home economy side of the agreement and point out the advantages to be obtained therefrom. The "National" papers can let themselves go to their heart's content in floods of political culture. Anti-Semitic views could only be allowed in a few of the baser "rags" at the most.

The Chancellor approved these suggestions. "But don't forget, gentlemen," he added, "that to foreign countries this agreement must be stressed as strongly as possible as a contribution to European peace, and in every commentary it must be said that there is no question of an internal political pact with National-Socialism."

The conference discussed the Treaty in detail, especially those points on the gradual abolition of economic restrictions and the mutual admission of newspapers, which, however, to begin with would only take place on a small scale. The representatives of various Press organizations gave free expression to their misgivings and advised the greatest caution. But in general the Chancellor had the feeling that his colleagues were in agreement and had not raised any fundamental objections. "That went off all right," Guido Schmidt whispered to him as the meeting broke up in a rather excited frame of mind with hearty handshakes all round.

Simultaneously with the publication of the Austro-German Treaty of the 11th of July 1936,¹ the text of an *aide-memoire*

¹ See appendices I to V. The appointment of Glaise-Horstenau to Minister without portfolio and of Guido Schmidt to Secretary of State at the Foreign Office followed on the same day.

to the practical steps to be taken to carry it through was sent to the offices of the leading Austrian Foreign and Press politicians, to which the agreement of the Austrian and German negotiators was appended, signed by both parties. In the original text of this *aide-memoire*, which was to be deposited in the Berlin archives, there is a sentence reading: "On foreign political questions affecting both Governments, an exchange of views will take place." This sentence in the hectographed copies sent to the Austrian Government Press and diplomatic offices had been made illegible and replaced by the following sentence, added by a typewriting machine: "By this means the traditional Austrian foreign policy will be strengthened. Hence it naturally follows that there is the possibility of an exchange of views on foreign political questions of interest to both countries."

* * *

On the evening of the 11th July there was optimism in both Vienna and Berlin. But this optimism had very different origins. "The relations between Austria and Germany are now on a lasting and firm basis. From now on we have truly solid ground under our feet. The main advantage, to my mind, is the fact that a solemn agreement has willingly been made by the Third Reich recognizing Austria's independence. The existence of the second German State is now completely separated from the German campaign against the forced, and therefore immoral, peace treaties. Hitler of his own free will has offered mutual contracts of guarantee. His international prestige will not allow him to treat the first of these as a 'scrap of paper.' Ours *is* the first, for the agreement with Poland is actually only an armistice whilst in our case it is a lasting peace. Germany has had too bad an experience with the 'scrap of paper' theory." Thus spoke the Austrian Chancellor during a private conversation shortly after the 11th July. "And the Concordat?" asked someone. "That is quite another matter," replied the Chancellor. "The Concordat which Hitler concluded in the summer of 1933 with the Holy See is certainly another treaty, but it refers to Germany's internal policy. In foreign affairs there is no question of German politics and the National-Socialist Party being identical. The

best proof you can have of that is the fact that whilst it is impossible to think of a Papen in some prominent position in Germany's domestic politics, he makes an excellent Ambassador of the Third Reich in Vienna." The skeptic was not convinced. "Even in Germany's domestic politics, Papen was the harbinger," he declared. "May he not have been in that position with us too?"

In Berlin the triumphant cry went up: "A beginning, a beginning!" Certainly there were some prominent people in the National-Socialist Party, as also in the Foreign Office—Goering was amongst them in those days—who held the view that the *Anschluss* itself and the absolute subjection of Austria in the Danzig form, might not be necessary. But as a result of the "regularizing" agreement, a position should and could be reached where Austria's domestic and foreign policy would be dictated by Berlin and only appear to emanate from Vienna. This was manifest even to them.

The juridical view of the Austrian Government, which was no more than the view ruling in the civilized world till now, of international right and the validity of State agreements, was therefore once more opposed to National-Socialist dynamics, for which both pacts and treaties between States are subject to the law of development, and loyalty to these can only be expected when they fulfill the main condition: value to the German people as interpreted by the National-Socialist Party and the Führer hierarchy. The Austrian signatories to the agreement with the Third Reich were soon to learn this. Whilst thinking that he had received from Hitler the assurance of his independence, the Austrian Chancellor had delivered up to him the diplomatic instrument in whose name the action to destroy this independence was to be carried out. There were now to be twenty months of Austro-German relations dominated by the disputes arising from the totally different interpretations of the agreement of July 11th, 1936.¹

¹ Documents relating to this agreement, and to the general subject matter of Chapters I and II, will be found in appendices I to V, pp. 277-294.

A PACT IS INTERPRETED

THE AUSTRO-GERMAN TREATY of Friendship was concluded on the 11th July 1936 and the entire Austrian Press, following its Government's instructions, cried out that the illegal National-Socialist movement had now been abandoned, disclaimed, even condemned, by the German Reich; and that therefore the Austrian National-Socialists who went on working for their Government's overthrow would be guilty not only of treason to their country but of open insubordination against the leader of the National-Socialist Party himself, Reich Chancellor Hitler. The organs of Austrian public opinion were unanimous in saying that there was great dejection in the camp of the illegal Brown-shirts. In Government circles it was considered a certainty that large masses would desert National-Socialism and would turn in the "Ultra-National" direction, which would be loyal to the new Austria and its Government, in which it would participate. On the 22nd July, five German newspapers were given official permission to circulate in Austria. These were the *Essener National Zeitung*,¹ the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Berliner Boersen Zeitung*, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and the *Leipziger Neuesten Nachrichten*. In addition to these there was the *Frankfurter Zeitung* which had been allowed into Austria even during the most heated time of the conflict. In return Germany allowed free entry to the official *Wiener Zeitung*, the *Wiener Neues*

¹ Goering's paper.

Journal, the *Volkszeitung*, which was also published in Vienna, the *Grazer* and the *Linzer Tagespost*. Until then the only paper allowed in the Reich, of the whole Austrian Press, had been the *Neue Freie Presse*. On the 22nd July the Austrian Government proclaimed the promised political amnesty. Only eleven Socialists and 224 National-Socialists were not released. The latter had all been guilty of acts of terrorism, mostly as participants in the *putsch* of the 25th July 1934 and thus indirectly responsible for the murder of the Chancellor Dollfuss. The scenes which took place on the release of the imprisoned National-Socialists were a proof that the Austrian members of that party did not feel in the least dejected or disowned by the German Reich. The general feeling was one of celebrating a first victory on which others must quickly follow, and they gave noisy demonstration of their triumph at the release of so many militant members of the Party.

Hitler had appointed his envoy in Vienna, Franz von Papen, Ambassador to Vienna on the 25th July, the second anniversary of the murder of the Chancellor Dollfuss. On the 29th July, that is to say barely three weeks after the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, the world was to be shown how the Austrian National-Socialists thought they could interpret this Treaty, which was supposed to make them feel disowned. On that day the Olympic torch passed through the Austrian capital on its way from Greece to Berlin, the site of the Olympic Games of 1936. This event, linked up with a parade of all the Austrian sports organizations, provided an opportunity for a National-Socialist demonstration of an extent not experienced since those bloody days of July 1934. There could no longer be any doubt that the Austrian National-Socialists did not feel themselves abandoned and disowned, but, on the contrary, were enlivened and encouraged to the highest degree. Their appearance was so provocative that the Patriotic Front felt forced to organize a counterdemonstration as quickly as possible so that the population and especially the officials, who on the 29th July showed great indecision, should not be under a false impression as to the effect of the events of the 11th July. This demonstration

took place on the 31st July. Already on the previous day the Government had decided to stop the releases which had not yet taken place, and to postpone them *sine die*. In spite of this it was possible to inform the Press at the beginning of January 1937 that to date, in accordance with the Treaty of Friendship, 18,624 National-Socialists had benefited under the amnesty and had left Austrian prisons or detention camps. A sensational document which came into the hands of the Austrian Government at this time and which later also came to Mussolini's knowledge, showed how little importance those on the far side of the border attached to the Treaty of July 11th. It was a circular letter from the management of the *Deutsche Studentenschaft* (the Association of German Students), the official National-Socialist organization covering all German universities. It was dated the 15th July 1936 and sent to all branches. In this circular on the July 11th Treaty the following passage occurs:

"... *cuius regio, eius religio*, as once before was said in German history. And so it would appear on this occasion. But it is not so. In its latest treaty the German Reich only recognizes facts as they are at the moment. A political necessity. No longer can France interfere so easily in German matters as regards the *Anschluss*. The Austrian baiting of the Reich by the Press will be stopped, and this is most important. In domestic affairs Schuschnigg stands today in the position of Dr. Seipel. But the question of refugees and prisoners turns the conquest to a Pyrrhic victory. In any case the internal political fight will not always be directed against the German Reich, and in spite of the reading of the new law for protection of the State, there still remains the Austrian N.S.D.A.P.

"So the battle goes on, and on *Weltanschauung*¹ lines. The Austrians once again carry it on alone, willingly and uncomplaining. The German Reich is relieved of it. An independent National-Socialist Austria is the approaching goal. The 'participation' which Schuschnigg henceforth grants to the 'National' circles, is naturally not the main purpose of the long

¹ A favorite word of the Nazis. A rough translation is "world conception."

struggle. If the National-Socialists have lost the first battle, partly waged with the wrong weapons, they must now ruthlessly commence the next.

"The aims of the fight are:—

- (a) Further enlightenment of the German people on the idea of a Greater Germany.
- (b) To win over the Austrian teaching profession to the National-Socialist idea and to a comprehension of a Greater Germany. This only means the maintenance of the pre-war German outlook.
- (c) Recruiting only amongst youth (explanation and training).
- (d) No propaganda as hitherto understood but training on the *Weltanschauung* basis:—
 - 1. Theater, Press, Cinema, Radio (general German events and culture).
 - 2. History (pan-Germanism).
 - 3. Economics (closest connection with the Reich).
 - 4. Foreign Travel (thorough education of the traveling public).
 - 5. Struggle against the Jews (also those within Austrian organizations) and as the main field: struggle for German unity against political Catholicism in every form.

"A great part of the work under Point 5 must be carried out in the German Reich, and shock troops in the Austrian universities must prepare the way for broadcasting it through the people. Hitler showed us this new way, which leads from the poisoned atmosphere of the daily struggle for jobs and bread to the final contest for the *Weltanschauung*. It must not be assumed that political Catholicism is quiescent in Austria and has given up the position it has hitherto held. But it is not in the better social circles that its fighting power is increased. Therefore the fight must not be waged round influential posts but round positions which are linked with the youth. The greatest adversary remains—Janus-headed Rome. . . ."

Nevertheless, the Chancellor's view was that the loyal observance of the Treaty by Austria did not allow of interference with the activities of the illegal Brownshirts in Austria, in spite of their continued and proved support by Germany.

* * *

The problem arising after the signing of the Treaty of July 11th was very simple for the Austrian National-Socialists. Thanks to the conciliation policy towards the "Ultra-National" element, the hitherto illegal party in Austria had now a legal opportunity, and they made the best possible use of this. There was certainly a fight as to the opportunities of utilizing one or the other position, but this finally became merely one of tactics, aggravated by the usual rivalries of the leaders of the illegal party. Legal action took the form of "cultural" and indirectly political penetration of Austria by National-Socialist propaganda. This culminated in an attempt to create an organization with and in addition to the Patriotic Front, which was to be called the "German-Social People's League" and to combine the "Ultra-Nationals" and those people sympathizing with National-Socialism. The National-Socialists and their German backers maintained that the establishment of this organization in Austria's public life would partially fulfill the Chancellor's promise in connection with the July Treaty, that the "Ultra-Nationals" should share responsibility. The Minister Neustädter-Stürmer was especially in favor of the plan for a "German-Social People's League." It was only after long hesitation, and on receiving startling revelations of the continuation of the illegal movement and its direct sponsoring by the Third Reich—and also for reasons of foreign policy—that Schuschnigg prohibited the formation of this League. Five hundred prominent men of the "National" camp had attached their signatures to an address to the Chancellor in support of the League. But he was determined to prevent it. He looked round for suitable partners in the camp of the "National Opposition," and the "Leopold Group" was suggested to him.

* * *

After the July *putsch* of 1934, when the National-Socialist organization in Austria appeared to be broken up, three men in the Wöllersdorf concentration camp resolved to set it on its feet again. This camp was one where the prisoners had no complaints to make of bad treatment and, above all, had plenty of free time to exchange views and to plan for the future. The three men, Captain Leopold, Dr. Tavs and Dr. Jury, were convinced that the first thing to do was to form a new, central nucleus of the illegal party with people who hitherto had come under official notice as little as possible, and then to get numerous followers from the intelligentsia who would not arouse suspicion. Leopold was set free at the beginning of 1936 and Tavs and Jury were liberated under the July amnesty. They set to work immediately.

Captain Leopold was an engineer. He went through the war as a non-commissioned officer in the Imperial Army and finished the war with the rank of Warrant Officer. He remained in the newly founded *Volkswehr* and joined the Social-Democratic organization of Austrian regular soldiers, in the leadership of which he worked with the future Social-Democratic Army Minister, Julius Deutsch. Leopold never passed the examination that would have opened up a career as an officer; but on account of his long service and good conduct during the war he was given the honorary rank of Captain. He was in barracks at Bruck on the Leitha. His disillusionment drove him into the National-Socialist Party, which he officially entered in 1925. His political activities resulted in a reprimand and, finally, expulsion from the Army. As a reward for his "sacrifice" the Party offered him a constituency and a seat in the Council by the side of the old "leaders" Frauenfeld and Schattenfeld. He had taken up his residence in his home town of Krems, whither he had also gone after his release from the concentration camp.

Dr. Tavs, a Sudeten German by birth, chemist by profession, had taken a position after the war in the State Patent Office. He had joined the National-Socialist Party fairly early, and for a time had been one of the heads of the National-Socialist Group of Officials. His political activities cost him his position also. Tavs was a close friend of the President of the Sudeten German

Party, Konrad Henlein, and had established the alliance formed by the National-Socialist "illegals" in Austria with Henlein's party.

Dr. Jury, a doctor of medicine from St. Pölten, had originally been the Christian-Social Councilor for his Southern Austrian home. He, too, joined the N.S.D.A.P. early, whose first Austrian group he founded in conjunction with the chemist and—after his flight to Germany—official of the *Kraft durch Freude* (strength through joy) movement, Rentmeister. At that time, Jury and Rentmeister belonged to the so-called Schulz section of National-Socialism which tried to put into practice the economic ideas of Gottfried Feder. Even his political opponents had to admit Jury's personal honesty.

* * *

Immediately after the July Treaty, Leopold, Tavs and Jury commenced to carry through their plans. They founded the "Committee of Seven" together with the following: the journalist In der Mauer, whom Papen had made the Vienna correspondent of the former Berlin Center paper *Germania* controlled by him; the former Lieutenant-Fieldmarshal Bardolff; the University Professor Menghin, exponent of the Catholic "Bridge builders," who was also Rector for a year of the Vienna University, where he lectured on the prehistoric period; and the Kärnten National-Socialist Globotschnig, now Vienna district leader. Frustrated in the work of preparation for the organization of the "German-Social People's League," this nucleus remained a capable group whom the Chancellor, on the suggestion of Neustädter-Stürmer, decided to interview. This interview took place on the 12th February. The Chancellor had invited the Minister Neustädter-Stürmer, the Police President of Vienna, Skubl, and his personal adjutants Bartl and Sturminger. The Committee of Seven were represented by Jury and Menghin. In addition, Dr. Seyss-Inquart was summoned to represent the "Nationals." Leopold waited in the anteroom and, as the Chancellor emphasized later, was only called in for a few minutes to be introduced personally. During this short period Leopold promised that the National-Socialists would conduct themselves

loyally during the forthcoming visit of the Reich's Foreign Minister, Baron von Neurath. In actual fact they arranged a demonstration which went far beyond even that given during the Olympic festivities. So the Committee of Seven also proved that they were not working for peace. In spite of this the Chancellor negotiated with them. According to statements made by the National-Socialists, which in accordance with Schuschnigg's domestic policy were not denied, the Chancellor made the following concessions to the representatives of the National Opposition:—

- (1) He begged them not to insist on the German Social People's League, and not to raise the issue again for a time; but to content themselves meanwhile with the work of the Committee of Seven, which he recognized *de facto* and with which he wished to keep in touch. Consent was given to the founding of provincial committees.
- (2) He undertook to see that reporters and special agents would be appointed in the Vienna and provincial leaderships of the Patriotic Front, with instructions to maintain contact on all national questions, on the lines of what was done in the Social-Labor Association, to facilitate the work of the "Ultra-Nationals" in and with the Patriotic Front, and to intervene in cases of difficulty.
- (3) He agreed to a reform of the Exceptional Law (Safety of the State).
- (4) He declared himself ready to take administrative and legal steps to continue with the amnesty, so that the release of 145 National-Socialists still in prison would gradually follow. Proceedings should be stopped, sentences modified and the regime of discrimination for members of the "Ultra-Nationals" abandoned.
- (5) There would be a friendly examination of the interests of all officials dismissed on account of their National-Socialist activities.
- (6) The reinstatement of students of the Austrian High Schools dismissed for the same reason was also to be considered.

- (7) Finally the Chancellor agreed to the gradual weeding out from executive positions of all people who were specially objectionable to the "National" circles.

Captain Leopold made this declaration: "I declare that on political grounds we recognize the independence of Austria and take this as our basis. This declaration also applies to the Constitution of 1934 and to the law regarding the Patriotic Front, outside which we will form no party."

* * *

On the basis of their understanding with the Chancellor the Authorities allowed the Committee of Seven certain liberties. Offices were taken in the Teinfaltstrasse in the center of Vienna, where great activity was soon shown. On the first floor of the house, the Vienna sub-committee of the Committee of Seven was established (in actual fact it was the Vienna district leadership of the forbidden National-Socialist Party). The second floor was given over to private rooms and the Committee itself had its offices on the third floor. The undertaking not to "found" a party outside the Patriotic Front was given an ironical commentary by the fact that the numerous orderlies on "duty" in the Teinfaltstrasse openly wore the party uniform of the National-Socialists.

* * *

When Kurt von Schuschnigg gave his consent to the formation of the Committee of Seven, he had no idea that several members of this committee, including Leopold and Jury (with Tavs as proxy), belonged to a National-Socialist Party executive committee which included the Counsellor to the German Embassy, von Stein, and an active officer in the Austrian Army who was so well camouflaged that even today his name has not been mentioned outside the initiated circle. Still less did Schuschnigg imagine that a laundry in the Helferstorferstrasse, only a few minutes from the Teinfaltstrasse, concealed the illegal apparatus of the National-Socialists whose executive committee included Dr. Jury, In der Mauer, the retired President of the Senate, Manlicher, provincial leader, Wolfsegger, the S.S. leader and engineer Kalten Kaltenbrunner, and even the

University Professor and former Rector, Menghin. He did not know that a former officer of the Austrian Army, Major Jäger, had undertaken the reorganization of the S.A. and the S.S. and S.A. formations had been re-established throughout the country as before July 1934.

In the Helferstorferstrasse, where a secret printing press was installed, the illegal propaganda material, other than that which came from the Reich, was produced and thence distributed. This included the "official Party organ," the *Oesterreichische Beobachter*. The police succeeded in raiding this nest on the 24th May 1937. They found some interesting material on the dispatch of illegal propaganda from Berlin and Munich. Thus the Chancellor received a second serious warning as to the possibility of any conciliatory action by the National-Socialists who were supposed to have been left in the lurch by the July Treaty. The first warning had been given in the autumn of 1936. Then, on the 27th October, the police had arrested a National-Socialist terrorist, an engineer named Woitsche, who had gone to South America and for months had spread Hitler propaganda amongst the Germans and Austrians of Chile. He had suddenly returned to Austria with plans to assassinate the Chancellor when visiting his wife's grave or by dropping a bomb on the Chancellory from an aeroplane. The group formed by Woitsche for this purpose were arrested with him. In spite of the roundabout way taken by Woitsche via South America, the threads could be traced connecting him with the Reich propaganda service, with the Party Center at Munich and with the German Foreign Institute in Stuttgart. The Police President Skubl and the Police Counsellor Weiser personally brought Woitsche's dossier to the Chancellor's attention. He placed it in a drawer of his desk with the probable intention of bringing it out at a suitable moment when having a difficult discussion with von Papen.

In the days that followed there was plenty of evidence of the continued support of the National-Socialists by the Reich, such as the disclosure of a courier service from Vorarlberg serving an ostensibly neutral sports organization, the discovery at Salzburg which proved that the Reich's railway service, that is to say an

official German institution, was being used to carry illegal pamphlets to Austria, and the capture of a car filled with National-Socialist propaganda material and driven by two German S.S. men. This car, which was caught in the upper Austrian frontier town of Schärding, was found to be the official car of the Burgo-master of the Bavarian town Passau. The majority of such cases were hushed up.

The raid on the center in the Helferstorferstrasse only resulted in the illegal apparatus also being transferred to the Teinfaltstrasse. The members of the illegal Vienna provincial leadership used to frequent the offices—a Nazi functionary called Katzenberger; the present Deputy Mayor of Vienna, Richter; and the Vice-Chairman of the Vienna workers' council, Lengauer, who had been taken over from the former *Heimwehr* trade unions.

At number 2 Trattnerhof, close to the Teinfaltstrasse, was the "German Club" whose President was Lieutenant-Field-marshal von Bardolff and whose first Vice-President was Seyss-Inquart. Amongst others frequenting the club were the German Ambassador von Papen, the Counsellor von Stein, the former infantry General, Alfred Krauss, who as an army leader took the credit for the victory of Caporetto, Dr. Jury and the inevitable Professor Menghin. Those "fine gentlemen" of the "national opposition," who looked down their noses at the plebeian Leopold, used to gather in the German Club. It was the members of this club who, under the leadership of Seyss-Inquart after the annexation, wished to put the Leopold Group out of existence.

The traitors also used to gather in the house of Planetta, the murderer of Dollfuss, in Maurer near Vienna. There also could be seen the mysterious Major Klausner, retired from the Austrian Army on half-pay, the man who was Hitler's own confidant in Austria and who was personally held responsible by the Führer for the actions of the illegal party. The S.S. had their secret drilling ground in Hütteldorf-Hacking, just outside Vienna. Actually it was not secret. The police knew all about it, as also about what went on in the Teinfaltstrasse. Further, they

new of the courier service which went via Henlein to Berlin and was run by the German Thiemen and the Brothers Dubsky, citizens of Czechoslovakia.

Nor was it quite unknown to enlightened circles in Vienna that the financing of Austrian National-Socialism was only partly from Berlin and Munich, but partly also from the Austrian branches of German industries. That was where Herr Doktor Neubacher came in. At the time of the Social-Democratic municipal administration of Vienna, he was ornamenting the position of Managing Director of "Gesiba," the public utility settlement and building company. At that time he was the Austrian President of the "German-Austrian Peoples' Union" which on the German side was presided over by the Social-Democratic President of the Reichstag, Löbe. After the events of February and July 1934, Neubacher had got into touch with the National-Socialists and finally became one of them. He was interned in Wöllersdorf for a time on that account. Then he was given a seat on the board of the Detag and still received his pension from the Gesiba. The Detag, "*Deutsche Teerfarben- und Chemikalien-Handels A.—G.*" (German Aniline Dye and Chemical Works Limited) of 19 Schottenring, Vienna I, was an affiliated company of the *I. G. Farben*, and Neubacher's post as director was nothing more than a camouflaged center for the distribution of funds to the illegal National-Socialist Party. Today Herr Doktor Neubacher is Burgomaster of Vienna.

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The "cultural" process of penetration was directed from the Teinfaltstrasse and guided along channels agreed upon with the German leaders. Since the 11th July, Vienna and the Austrian provinces had been overrun with institutions which poured out thinly veiled propaganda for the Reich. Series of lectures by representatives of German science and technology were arranged and German artists came to Vienna in large numbers. The central organizations of National-Socialist culture politics, the Reich Chamber of Culture, the Reich Chamber of Films, the propaganda offices of the German book trade, were all engaged in propaganda for the conquest of Austria. The Austrian pub-

lishing trade and film production, dependent as they were on the German market, were easily swayed by economic pressure, not only to give up any counteraction against National-Socialist ideology, but to work actively in the service of an "all-German" conception of culture and its National-Socialist interpretation.

The Organization of Reich Germans in Austria had to give very far-reaching service. The *Deutsches Haus* in Vienna was the center from which this organization was run. The German travel agency also provided indirect political propaganda. Every German tourist who came into Austria was a propagandist for the Third Reich. The greeting sign of the Reich, and above all the Swastika badge and Swastika flag, were allowed to them after the Treaty of Friendship. They now had instructions to show them as prominently and as often as possible. Woe betide the motorist of whom it was reported after his return home that he had failed to fly the Swastika flag on the bonnet of his car. A well-organized secret police service, which was willingly aided by the Austrian Nazis, watched that during his stay in Austria he fulfilled the purpose for which his journey had been allowed and made possible.

The thousand-mark tax had been abolished, it is true, but the financial arrangements made it easy for the authorities to allow only those people to reach Austria who were entirely true to Hitler and above all suspicion. Further, the arrangement on showing political emblems gave many Austrian National-Socialists also the opportunity of flying the Swastika flag on their cars. Police officials, after many unpleasant experiences from stopping Reich Germans domiciled in Austria, no longer dared to ask the driver of a car with Austrian registration plates whether he had the right to fly the flag.

After the raid by the Austrian police on the illegal center in the Helferstorferstrasse, the same game was played as always occurred when the Austrian Government thought that they had dealt a crushing blow. Herr von Papen turned up at the Ballhausplatz and implored the Chancellor, in the interests of Austro-German friendship and the execution of the Treaty, not to attach too much importance to "the trivial affair" and the

actions of obviously irresponsible elements who were certainly not supported by the Reich. And Schuschnigg always gave in. He knew only too well that any other attitude would mean an official admission that the Policy introduced on the 11th July had failed. Without any illusions as to the policies of the other Powers, the help to be expected from Italy and the preparedness of the Western Powers to guarantee Austria's independence alone and without Mussolini's co-operation, he had got the idea into his head that only the desperate adherence to the Treaty of Friendship could gain the time so necessary for Austria until a change took place in the European situation.

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Certainly the political situation at home did not allow the Chancellor idly to watch the National-Socialist attempts at penetration. Again and again he took pains to strengthen the courage and the pride of his patriotic people. The speeches which he made on many occasions, generally at demonstrations of the Patriotic Front in Vienna and the Alpine country, did not fail in this respect. The impression emerged from these speeches, as it did from Schuschnigg's whole being, of complete calm, great self-control, clarity and certainty of political aim. Again like Bruening, Kurt von Schuschnigg knew how to give an impression of far greater energy and internal calm than he really possessed. That torturing doubt of himself did not appear on the surface. And as he really lived in the knowledge of danger and did not hide this when speaking confidentially, he was thought always to be on the alert and ready to combat this danger with every means in his power.

On a gala day of the Patriotic Front which took place at Graz in the summer of 1937, a Schuschnigg enthusiast asked, with anxiety as to the Chancellor's position, what was actually going to happen regarding the double game being played by the National-Socialists. Did the Chancellor know that he was like Siegfried, behind whom lurked the traitor Hagen with a spear? This pointed allusion to the "Ultra-National circles" and individual colleagues of the Chancellor with whom he was carrying through his policy of reconciliation, caused a breathless

tension in the hall. Schuschnigg replied that he was quite aware of the position, but there was a great difference: Siegfried, the hero of the Saga, had not known that Hagen was a traitor. But he, the Chancellor, knew perfectly well how much loyalty he could depend upon from certain gentlemen. This question and answer, with its poetic simile, had calmed even the very pessimistic and skeptically inclined members of the audience and had strengthened their faith in Schuschnigg.

They thought they could see through the Chancellor's tactics. His policy of liquidating the *Heimwehr* had been singularly happy, and with diplomatic genius he had turned the Fey-Starhemberg quarrel to the alleviation of the whole situation. He was employing the same tactics with regard to the National-Socialists, playing up the differences in their camp. By this means he reckoned that, in favoring the "moderates" against the radical National-Socialists, the "Ultra-Nationals" against the actual Nazis, he would attract co-workers from those camps where they were all mixed and had representatives of various political views, and would place himself in the position of chief arbiter and the only man who could give a decision. Even in his relations with the Third Reich he thought he could make use of their internal differences, which were so obvious. The constant innuendoes by Herr von Papen were scarcely necessary to convince him that there was a fight going on in Berlin on the result of which would depend the final attitude of Germany towards Austria. Kurt von Schuschnigg did not only see the struggle going on round the President of the Reichsbank, Schacht, and those concentrated round the leadership of the *Reichswehr* against the totalitarian policy of National-Socialism, he also thought he could see within the ruling parties of the Reich a quarrel between the "wings" which might enable him to operate against them.

It is no reproach to the Chancellor to say that he must have drawn deductions from the situation within the German National-Socialist Party and the known tendency of Hitler not to make decisions until they were forced on him by the constant concern of maintaining power. He must also have been influ-

enced by the added factor of the policy of others in the development of the international situation, such as the British Government. It is most difficult for those outside to realize that National-Socialism, so far as its internal tension and quarrels are concerned, has made a virtue out of a necessity. It is not of any special credit to the National-Socialist leaders that they thought of turning a latent danger to something advantageous to the existing situation. It has been so often repeated to those leading the Third Reich that it is the fate of all dictatorships to wear themselves out in the wars of destruction amongst the leader's entourage, and to reach "normality" of the regime through the "teething troubles of Radicalism." The events of the 30th June 1934 appeared to these prophets to confirm such views although the blow on this occasion was not only struck against the Left, the pretorian system, in the shape of the S.A. formation of Captain Röhm, but also against the "reactionary" enemies of the Hitler regime. In any case the conviction abroad was that in the N.S.D.A.P. there was a struggle between moderate and radical views, that on the one side there was Goering trying to ally himself to all the traditional powers of society, whilst on the other were Goebbels, Rosenberg, Himmler and Ley, and that the final victory would certainly be with the moderates. This view had already brought the Third Reich quite considerable concessions, which were made in order to provide the time necessary for the final victory of the moderate wing. Taking advantage of these concessions, the powers that be in Germany today have concocted a complete system of using both wings which they always successfully lay before their foreign partners in negotiations, when it is a question of restricting anti-National-Socialist action abroad.

Schuschnigg's hitherto successful domestic policy now lay unquestionably in the carrying through of a plan which, employed against National-Socialism, might become highly dangerous. For it entailed using exactly those tactical moves which the adversary wished and had reckoned on. Like all politicians wrapped in their day's fight, he was inclined to overestimate the tactics and to let the methods of his policy form their own

object. The feeling of superiority in tactical, psychological and intellectual questions which was unfortunately bound up with a unavowed inferiority complex, could and must be dangerous to the Chancellor so far as he had to deal with adversaries who directed their battles towards an unrestricted striving after power. Schuschnigg's elegant diplomatic foil was powerless against the brutal blows from the bludgeon of a policy of power. Unhappily the Chancellor had forgotten that there are other weapons which must be used to defeat an opponent who will not be intimidated by a foil.

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With endless patience the Chancellor tried to continue the policy which had led to the conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship, through the constant crises which followed it. Each time that he was forced to retreat a step in his policy of satisfying the "Ultra-Nationals" and the disguised National-Socialists, he tried to make a fresh start in another way. The first move had been to take Glaise-Horstenau into the Cabinet. The anticipated effect did not materialize. Apart from having to meet continual complaints from the Minister without portfolio that he had no hand in the government and that he was not informed of the most important of the Chancellor's resolutions, no good could come of being burdened with such a man. Glaise-Horstenau gave only a very grudging recognition of Austria's independence and so was almost in opposition to the very reasons for the existence of the Government to which he belonged. The "National Opposition" was not disarmed, and the demand to include some of the trusted men of the National-Socialist Party in Schuschnigg's Cabinet was not silenced.

The experiment recommended by Guido Schmidt of making Neustädter-Stürmer Minister of Security after the final separation of the Starhemberg *Heimwehr* leadership from the former *Heimwehr* leader Fey, was obviously expected by Schuschnigg to turn the Home Ministry into a purely administrative department under Glaise-Horstenau, and that having his own Security Ministry would have a paralyzing effect on this "Ultra-National" Minister. Actually the results of this were very far-

reaching. In the interests of reliability which was so lacking in Neustädter-Stürmer, the executive had to be discharged. But when Schuschnigg himself, supported by the Vienna Police President, Skubl, took over the administration, the pressure for fulfillment of the alleged promises of the 11th July increased anew in a threatening way and were given public support from the Italian side by an article written by Gayda in the *Giornale d'Italia* after the Venice Conference of May 1937. The Chancellor, who only recently (in a speech on the 1st May) had spoken plainly against two-faced politics and had seriously warned the "Ultra-Nationals," had to seek other means to avert the threatened storm. For some time he thought he had found them in the Committee of Seven and in treating directly with National-Socialist leaders of the Leopold type. This was the time of the Neustädter-Stürmer experiment, when the sanctioning of the "German Social People's League" of opponents of the Government appeared advisable. The only thing which deterred the Chancellor from taking this step was the reaction abroad. Leopold had certainly disgracefully abused the trust placed in him. Schuschnigg's answer to all these events which made the ground tremble under his feet was a further attempt at internal pacification. This time it was with the Seyss-Inquart Group of National-Socialists, the representatives of tactics attaching the greatest importance to so-called legal action. The institution of political reporters in the Patriotic Front was intended, on the one hand, to distract the "National Opposition" from the demand for direct participation in the Government, and, on the other hand, to offer this opposition some compensation for the refusal to sanction the "German Social People's League." It was once again Schuschnigg's old game: to rule by dividing. Seyss-Inquart, who had just been appointed State Councillor, shared the organization of these "people's political reporters" with a Tyrolese supporter of Germany, Dr. Pembaur. Seyss-Inquart was a notorious National-Socialist, but a practicing Catholic and a representative of a form of Austrian National-Socialism which believed in the maintenance of Austria's position as a second German State to the Reich. Pembaur,

an old Liberal and Anti-cleric, had been all his life a speaker in favor of a German National *Anschluss*, but was against the National Socialist ideology. He had not fulfilled the Chancellor's hopes that he would be a counterbalance to Seyss-Inquart in the "National Opposition," and within a short time after his official appointment he was playing a very passive part.

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The matter which worried the Chancellor most in the months following the conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship was the open conviction in German diplomatic circles in Austria that this Treaty gave them the right to active supervision and continual intervention. Every word of criticism of the Third Reich which appeared in the Austrian Press, every protest of Austrian officials against the National-Socialist activities of Austrian citizens, was followed not only by a furious storm in the German Press, but also by intervention. The Press Attaché at the German Embassy in Vienna, Herr von Hagen, had become a very frequent guest of the Chief of the Austrian Press Service, and just as frequent were von Papen's "intercessions" at the Ballhausplatz. Although he himself knew, more or less, how to conduct himself, the German Consuls in Graz and Innsbruck, notorious National-Socialists, behaved like pro-consuls in a defeated country. They caused infinite trouble if they imagined that the Swastika on the breast of a German had been slighted, or if some words spoken by a private individual in their or their representatives' hearing might be taken as disparaging to the Third Reich. They by no means followed the orderly example of their Embassy in Vienna. They would have preferred to deal with matters directly, quite at variance with international custom which draws a sharply defined line between diplomatic and consular functions. For some time the Consuls of the Reich used to go straight to the authorities, completely ignoring the Austrian Government. Very energetic action was necessary from the Ballhausplatz to put a stop to this abuse, and surprisingly this action was taken by the State Secretary Guido Schmidt who felt himself personally aggrieved by this behavior.

Every morning when Herr von Papen entered his office he

would find on his desk a collection of that day's Austrian newspapers in which industrious officials had heavily underlined every "offense" against the Treaty or the Press "peace." Actually every comment on the Third Reich which was not expressed in the highest terms of praise, was deemed an "offense." So it came about that in later discussions over the extension of the Press agreement, the representatives of the Reich were able to claim more than three hundred "established offenses" of the Austrian papers against only six "slips" by the German Press. The Austrian Government shuts its eyes to these and only very rarely took official action against the incessant campaign of the German papers of attacking everything which the Austrians in their patriotism felt and thought.

Threads led directly from the German Embassy and the Teinfaltstrasse to the sympathetic members of the Government. With Guido Schmidt in the Foreign Office, Glaise-Horstenau in the Home Office and Neustädter-Stürmer in the Ministry of Public Security, a regime of weakening Austria's will to defend herself was put into operation. Executive officials who showed opposition to National-Socialist activities functionaries of the Patriotic Front and publicists who were in the front line of Austria's defense could be sure that they would receive unfavorable notice from certain high officials and would not be able to find the necessary protection from other quarters. It was known that an intelligence organization existed in Austria even before the discovery made among the Salzburg Nazis, when it was found that there was a widespread system of secret police and that practically the entire Austrian population was catalogued according to its feelings towards the Third Reich and National-Socialism. Further there was a Black List naming people who were to suffer special revenge from the victors in case of an overthrow of the Government. It also appeared that special trusted agents of the National-Socialists sat in the most important Government offices in the guise of patriots. Every action by the police directed against the illegal organizations was always known to them beforehand. The result was a general feeling of insecurity, especially in the provinces. In those districts

where the National-Socialists had a number of supporters, the executives and officials of the Patriotic Front must have felt very isolated. For this National-Socialist minority terrorized society, and the population dared make no stand against it. The 11th July had thus not only encouraged the Nazis but had caused a deep-seated discouragement of their adversaries, who no longer felt themselves protected by their Government. After one of the Chancellor's visits into the country the following significant story was told: Schuschnigg had taken a Tyrolese peasant to one side and asked him to state quite openly what he thought of the Government. But the peasant had replied that this was not possible. On being assured that he could speak his mind freely and that no punishment would follow whatever he might say, there was still hesitation. But Schuschnigg had set his heart on hearing the peasant's views. At last the latter asked whether the Chancellor would guarantee that if he did answer, his words would not be reported to the Doctor, nor the Veterinary Surgeon, nor the Magistrate, nor the Chemist of the district. On receiving this assurance from the surprised Chancellor, he declared that he himself had no fault to find with the Government.

In an effort to give their German co-signatory to the Treaty as little opportunity as possible for intervention and at the same time to avoid any disturbance of economic life (for foreign visitors), the Austrian Government tried after the 11th July to limit political activities throughout the country. The result was that the activities of the Patriotic Front—except for the few large demonstrations which were essential to prove its existence—were practically crippled. Had it not been for the activities of the Legitimists, the Catholic Unions and the Guilds, anti-National-Socialist action would have been to all intents and purposes non-existent.

The interference by Germans in Austrian domestic matters, so contrary to the spirit and letter of the July Treaty, went even so far as prying into the personal attitude of the Austrian Government. Complaints were continually being made, in a careful way but one which could not be misunderstood, of the "anti-

German" sentiments of one or another high official. Even during the conversations which preceded the signing of the Treaty, Herr von Papen had said that he considered that the Director of the political section of the Foreign Office, Hornbostel, and the Head of the Press Services, Ludwig, seemed far too much tainted by their activities during the period of conflict to expect any useful service from them towards German peace. On that occasion Schuschnigg stood up for his colleagues. Hornbostel remained in office, chiefly because his knowledge of people and matters was indispensable to the new Chief of the Foreign Office, Guido Schmidt. But the Reich insisted as a concession that a second political director be called into the Ballhausplatz in the person of the then Ambassador to Warsaw, Hoffinger, who was to deal with all Austro-German questions. He had proved himself to be a thoroughly patriotic Austrian official. Ludwig, on the other hand, had to go. Due to German propaganda, the Head of the Press Services had become very unpopular, even in influential Austrian circles. Propaganda supported from Berlin had represented him to the Catholics as a Liberal who had nothing in common with the spirit of the new Austria. On the other hand, amongst those who wished for greater freedom of action for National-Socialism, the view was spread that Ludwig was restricting the activities of the Vienna Press by continual interference in the editorial running of the papers. So it was that on the 2nd December 1936, Ludwig was recalled from the leadership of the Press Services with, it is true, an honorable commission to organize the new Press Chamber. But his successor was not a more pronounced opponent of National-Socialism as was hoped, but the hitherto Chief of the Propaganda Commission of the Government, the erstwhile general secretary of the Patriotic Front, Colonel Adam. Without doubt he was a sincere believer in Austrian independence, but a much more pliable, conciliatory man than his predecessor and also much less active. The Press offices were at the same time removed from the Chancellery to the comparatively distant Dorotheenstrasse. Meanwhile a man had been introduced to the Foreign Office whom Guido Schmidt looked upon as his special confidant,

the Ministerial Councillor Wolf. He took over the duties of spreading and carrying through the Cultural agreement with foreign countries. These duties were especially important in view of the general effort to separate this from every political connection. He was destined to become for two days Foreign Minister to Austria's first National-Socialist Government.

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Of all the measures of the July agreement, none had such disastrous results to Austria's dignity as the supervision of the Press. Originally the following was agreed upon:—

“Both Austria and the German Reich will instruct the Press of their respective countries to refrain from endeavoring to influence conditions in the other's country. Pertinent criticism shall only be made when it conveys no offense to the other country. This also refers to the emigrant Press. A gradual abolition of the prohibition of importing each other's newspapers and other printed matter is in view. The matter in the newspapers and printed matter allowed into the other country must naturally be specially worded so as to keep within the specified limits of criticism.”

As an appendix the following principles of Press policy were agreed:—

“Unless the facts of the case have been carefully proved, no message shall appear in the newspapers of either country which may excite public opinion in the other or which may raise controversy. Messages from papers or agents which are notoriously inimical to both countries must not be accepted under any conditions. Reports and leading articles in the papers shall give suitable space not only to the negative, but also to the positive results reached by the Governments of both countries. Personal views shall not be permitted. Ideological and confessional questions involving differences may only be discussed in objective form and never in any way which may cause offense. The Press shall never offer encouragement to one State against another or to any movement

directed against its Government and must be conscious of the responsibility placed on it by the fact that both countries belong to the German people."

The Austrian Government had kept careful watch on the carrying out of this agreement so far as foreign politics were concerned. From the 11th July onwards, the Austrian Press had refrained from criticism of the foreign policy of the Third Reich. It had specifically avoided criticizing Germany's military policy. In no Austrian paper was any reference to be found to the subordination of all political and economic factors to the most rapid and most complete armament. The weightiest argument which the peace-loving Austrian population had to offer against National-Socialism was not used, namely that it led to war. Any reference to the anti-National-Socialist tendencies in the Third Reich itself was forbidden. The revival of anti-Prussian, federal sentiment in Southern and Western Germany, so important to Austria, was not mentioned. And the papers were just as silent on the subject of the extreme centralization of the Hitler regime, and on the economic difficulties of the Third Reich. Even the *Reichswehr* crisis at the beginning of 1938, whose solution was to lead to the annexation of Austria, was not placed before the Austrian public in its true significance. The Austrian Government had very exact and detailed information on the crisis in the Third Reich, the internal differences in the National-Socialist Party and the dissatisfaction caused by the economic crisis. Even the persecution of the Church in the Third Reich, which had to be censured in the Catholic papers at least, was presented in a very apologetic way. For a long time, in fact right up to the Papal Encyclical against National-Socialism, the official *Reichspost* had maintained "with burning zeal" the version that the war of culture in Germany was the work of radical firebrands in the National-Socialist Party who had not liked the decision of the truly responsible circles in Germany. The Rome correspondent of the *Reichspost* had repeatedly come out with false reports of a forthcoming peace pact between the Catholics and National-Socialist Ger-

many, which were always groundless. At last matters got to such a pitch that Austria's main Catholic organ received an indirect warning from the Vatican. Any expression of opinion from Reich German emigrants, even from Catholics favorable to the regime, was vigorously suppressed in Austria. Emigrant papers and literature was often banned, even books so favorable to Austria as those by the emigrant German author Konrad Heiden, in which the Chancellor himself had found the greatest pleasure. On the slightest signs of controversy against the Third Reich, the Austrian Press was subjected to warnings, fines and even the confiscation of the offending issue. The weekly paper *Der Christliche Ständestaat* originally founded with the co-operation of the Austrian Press Bureau, was always getting into trouble with the Government; whilst the Catholic paper *Brückenbauer* which was always "flirting" with the Third Reich, was never touched. Anti-Communist propaganda by the German Press, even though obviously veiling the imperialist aims of the Third Reich and branding as Communist matters which never had anything to do with Communism, was given great prominence in the Austrian newspapers, as was also any criticism of the West European democracies, their Governments and the League of Nations. Hair-raising news could be read in the Austrian papers about conditions in France after the election of May 1936 and the first Blum Government. After the foundation of the Rome-Berlin Axis, Austria's papers, with very few exceptions, were entirely at the service of their propaganda. The "Ultra-National" papers were not ashamed to publish columns of praise about the success of the Third Reich, which mostly originated from the German news agencies.

In contrast, any expressions of goodwill towards Austria were very rarely to be seen in the Reich Press and then they would be tucked away in a corner or else would be found in some provincial paper. Even then they would mostly be confined to personal praise of Guido Schmidt and his pro-German attitude. The National-Socialist papers of the Reich had no hesitation in attacking leading Austrian politicians, Austrian critics and above all the patriotic feeling of the Austrian people. The National-

Socialist paper, the *Essner National-Zeitung*, which was allowed into Austria, issued a special number destined for Austria filled with National-Socialist propaganda and National-Socialist criticism of everything in Austria which was offering resistance to the German acts of penetration. This paper even started a campaign against the main organ of the "Ultra-Nationals," the *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, whose editorials always sought to place loyalty to the Austrian Government before the pan-German attitude.

In spite of every desire to avoid a conflict, the Ballhausplatz was forced to protest repeatedly against deliberately mendacious news in the German papers and finally to threaten to denounce the Press agreement. There was a fictitious report published in German papers of the alleged prosecution and heavy penalties inflicted on some people who had performed acts of piety at the grave of Hitler's parents. Another report alleged inhuman treatment of imprisoned National-Socialists who had been driven to hunger strike. These were so vigorously discussed that on this occasion even the German Embassy could not avoid issuing a denial to the National-Socialists, but this denial only found its way into obscure corners of their papers.

Then it was—the beginning of July 1937—that the Chancellor began seriously to doubt whether it was possible to continue the policy of the 11th July. He gave a deep sigh of relief when the proposal was made from the German side that the whole question should come under review and a method be sought to avoid "incidents" in the future. He thought that now he had the proof that the Reich Government was fighting shy of a break. The truth of the matter was that it was only an extension of National-Socialist tactics to extract further concessions by an apparent retreat. Once again the Third Reich had pushed matters to a breaking point, beyond which only open conflict seemed possible. The reaction of those concerned was met by agreeing, with apparent reluctance, to negotiate.

The second Austro-German Press agreement resulting from the discussion of the 6th to 10th July, was completed on the 12th July, that is to say practically on the anniversary of the

signing of the Treaty of Friendship. It went considerably further than the first and brought about the almost complete gagging of the Austrian Press so far as their views on the politics of the Third Reich were concerned. An outstanding point was that both parties were to report immediately any breach of the Press peace, an arrangement of which the Austrian Government made very little use whilst German intervention, now officially legalized, was almost continuous. Then, just as the agreement of the 11th July was broken by a Nationalist-Socialist demonstration on the occasion of the Olympic celebrations, just as Leopold's promise of loyalty was broken by the demonstration when the Reich Foreign Minister visited Vienna on the 22nd February 1937, just as an Austro-German hand-ball match on the 23rd May was made the occasion for a demonstration which represented an answer to Schuschnigg's warning against two-faced politics, so was the new peace of the Press agreement followed by a provocative National-Socialist demonstration on the 18th July during an assembly of old soldiers at Wels (Upper Austria). This demonstration was all the more embarrassing to the Austrian Government inasmuch as it took place under the guise of a meeting of an association of ex-service men, during which impassioned speeches on Austro-German friendship were given by the Minister Glaise-Horstenau, the Ambassador von Papen and the Governor of Upper Austria, Gleissner, whose German sympathies were well known. This time the reaction was a little more lively. The counterdemonstration by the Patriotic Front took place in Wels itself a week after the other meeting, and again Gleissner was the chief speaker, and he spoke many strong words against the disturbance of the peace by the National-Socialists. This was followed by the disbanding of several sports associations which in reality had been nothing more than camouflaged National-Socialist organizations. But almost simultaneously (the 6th August 1937) the ban on Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* was lifted in Austria and a few days later the German Foreign Minister, who had gone to Brand in Vorarlberg for a cure, met the Secretary of State, Guido Schmidt, and once more agreed that the policy of the 11th July

should be continued. No action was taken against the Austrian National-Socialist singers on their return home after having taken part in the German Song Festival in Breslau at the end of July, and in a tour of Germany, when they had greeted Hitler as their leader.

During these critical months the Austrian Chancellor certainly showed great courage. Doubtless he too toyed with the idea of abandoning the policy of the 11th July and finding some other means of insuring Austria's independence. It is debatable as to what part in this connection was played by the question of a Restoration. The Chancellor met the Czechoslovak Prime Minister, Hozda, many times openly and demonstratively. The connection between these meetings, which took place in March and September 1937, and the manifestations of the Rome-Berlin Axis is well known. Many attempts were also made to draw Hungary into a policy of independence against the Third Reich. The Hungarian Government did actually support the Austrian steps in this direction and were able to place a considerable amount of material before Mussolini on the subject of German propaganda.

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It is also worth mentioning that the resistance shown by the Chancellor and his colleagues prevented the realization of the hopes which Berlin had cherished after the July agreement of the economic "Nazification" of Austria. After laborious and often interrupted negotiations, an Austro-German economic agreement came into existence on the 27th January 1937, but basically it was only a temporary measure which, incidentally, was never carried right through. The expected flood of German visitors was just as lacking after the 11th July as were the increases in traveling facilities promised to the German Reich. Both these disappointments might have brought disenchantment to the rural population of Austria had not National-Socialist propaganda continually insisted that the blame for this unfriendly result of the Treaty was to be laid at Austria's door and had nothing to do with the Third Reich. In the interests of economic independence Vienna had opposed a development of

trade which would have forced Austria, through creating a large surplus of foreign currency, to agree to the proposal which Germany had ready to put forward, namely, to balance the trade by taking Austria's surplus products from land and forest (timber and dairy products). Austria refused to introduce a barter system in which a wholesale acceptance of German products, notably arms of German manufacture, would have played a large part as she was resolved to continue the classic finance and bill policy which had made the Austrian schilling one of the standard currencies of the Continent and allowed the gradual reduction of her foreign debt. Acting on the advice of the Director of the National Bank, the former Finance Minister Kienboeck, the Chancellor refused to sacrifice other branches of industry and financial and economic independence for the possible benefit of Austria's agriculture. Even in spite of every precautionary step having been taken, the exchange account in Austria's favor had reached 40 million schillings, and trade between the two countries continued to show a balance in Austria's favor; yet the Austrian Government preferred to take the unpopular step of limiting export to the German Reich rather than go against their principles. When the President of the Reichsbank, Schacht, visited Vienna on the 17th and 18th July he failed to draw Austria into the economic jurisdiction of the Reich through the barter system as he had done with certain Balkan States, notably Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. It is certain that Austria's refusal to allow herself to be incorporated in Germany's Four-Year Plan had as much influence in hurrying the leaders of the Reich, especially Goering, to bring about the *Anschluss*, as had the failure of every attempt to force Austria to join the military front against Czechoslovakia. The Chancellor had honestly endeavored to maintain the policy laid down on July 11th and to make no concessions which were not in keeping with his aim of maintaining Austria's independence and sovereignty. Guido Schmidt went considerably further in this connection.

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For that portion of the Austrian people which supported National-Socialism, it was anything but a clear ideological and

political attitude. To the majority of the lower classes, the peasants and the unemployed, it was merely the opportunity, linked with the greatest possible demagogy, of giving expression to their dissatisfaction with their social position. Amongst the so-called intelligentsia, the deciding factor was the German national and, in a great many cases, the anti-clerical points of view. The big capitalists, particularly the Austrian industrialists, in spite of the experience of their compeers in the Third Reich, saw in the Hitler movement a barrier against a social policy they did not like and against a political swing to the Left, which was hard to conceive in Austria. On closer examination a hundred shades and motives could be found which might persuade individual people of the success of National-Socialism. The wish to stand well with the probable conquerors of tomorrow also played a large part after the 11th July; particularly was this so amongst officials and executives.

There was one common bond between all the Austrian National-Socialists and their opponents: anti-Semitism. Even before the war this had been of special importance in Austria and the political movement which emerged therefrom may well be regarded as the precursor of the National-Socialist Party. In contrast to the German Center Party, Austrian political Catholicism, represented by the Christian-Social Party, had had anti-Semitism inscribed on its banner, but, be it said, not as a racial theory. Even the State organized by Dollfuss was anything but friendly to the Jews, whilst not officially recognizing anti-Semitism. The ominous belief that the wind could be taken out of the sails of a radical movement such as National-Socialism by accepting them, whilst directing their actions into moderate and reasonable lines, worked out very disadvantageously in this respect. From 1934 to 1938 Austria was not sufficiently anti-Semitic to accept the National-Socialist view that the ruling classes are vassals of the Jews, but she was nevertheless much too anti-Semitic successfully to set herself against this "Socialism gone mad" and to be able to rob it of its demagogic force of attraction. The Jews were almost completely excluded from the State provincial, and municipal, administration, the number of

posts they held being far below the percentage of the Jewish population. It was different in economic life and in the liberal professions, but even here there was a noticeably rising tendency to fight Jewish influence, under the pressure of National-Socialist opposition. The danger that a semi-official anti-Semitism might be the precursor of a completely official one was never considered in responsible circles in Austria.

* * *

The twenty months of independent existence left to Austria after the Treaty of 11th July were just as much a Guido Schmidt era as a Schuschnigg era. If the Chancellor was convinced that no other policy was possible than that laid down in the Treaty of Friendship, he must also have told himself that the internal success he had expected from this policy, the "satisfaction" of the "Ultra-Nationals" and "moderate" National-Socialists could also not succeed. Nor could he be in any doubt that a change of the political course would certainly not have lowered his prestige with the patriotic-minded people, but would have greatly increased it. The united front of the true Austrians, the anti-National-Socialists, and with it the "liquidation of February," the reconciliation with the working classes and those inclined to be "Left," all these were within Kurt von Schuschnigg's realm of possibility. As he saw it, only the higher interests of the State could prevent him from reaching this great pinnacle of popularity. It was not so with Guido Schmidt. His political existence was wrapped up in the accomplishment of the Treaty of the 11th July. Not generally given to personal confessions and averse on principle to conversation, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, for whose appointment to this post he had to thank the Treaty with Germany, on occasions allowed himself nevertheless to be persuaded into confession.

It was in Geneva, September 1937. The members of the Austrian delegation to the League of Nations were gathered one evening on the terrace of the Hotel de la Paix where they were in the habit of staying since Austria joined the League. They were exchanging reminiscences, speaking of the great hopes which the League had once raised; of the Prelate Seipel, who

loved in his leisure hours to feed the swans on the lake from this hotel terrace. Then the conversation turned to actualities. News had been received of renewed activity by the Western Powers in Central Europe. Austria's permanent delegate to the League of Nations, von Pffügl, was inclined to believe the report to be well founded. Guido Schmidt, lying back in his armchair, only moving to knock the ash of his cigarette into a flower-pot standing next to him, listened for some time to the animated conversation of his colleagues without apparently taking any notice. As usual when he felt he was being watched he was wearing an almost bored expression. Only now and again a quick sparkle in his eyes showed that his nonchalant attitude was only a pose. Suddenly he sat up with a jerk and began to speak with a vivacity which was extremely rare with him.

"Western Powers here, Western Powers there," he declared. "Austria must consider her geographical-political situation. A Government wishing to rule on a long view cannot afford to neglect these facts, and must arrange its principles accordingly. And now there has to be added the relationship of blood and language with the Reich. Tell me how you can get away from the fact that the sentiment of masses of people towards Germany carries a lot of weight. We no longer live in the days of Cabinet politics. Although I'm a diplomat, I have always set my face against any unreal policy inimical to the people. We of the Austrian Government are young enough to notice the signs of the times. Incidentally, have you noticed how international politics are being run more and more by young people? Eden, Ciano, Spaak, Beck, Stoyadinowitsch, our Chancellor, I myself. Before long we Foreign Ministers will be running around with our bottles. So let's be practical. Germany is our greatest and strongest neighbor, we speak German; any anti-German policy would be to our detriment. I don't mean by that we should surrender our freedom of action. We won't sacrifice our freedom to Austria's German character, but the maintenance of our freedom at the cost of our German character would be Utopia—and not a very pretty one. Good Lord, I know the matter isn't as simple as all that. Internally we're fighting National-Socialism,

and yet we have to sit down at the same table with Germany where the National-Socialist Party *is* the State. Which leads to plenty of problems. But we weren't born yesterday. Look at all the hysterical screams both from home and abroad just because a few days ago I visited Goering at Schorfheide.¹ We had a very good chat. Are we to sit calmly by when Mussolini next goes to Berlin and talks about us, simply owing to a divergence of principles and an aversion to personal contact with a true Nazi. Anyway I thought it best to see for myself first and avoid being placed in a fix. Papen agreed with me. Our highest-placed people may yet have a few objections to carrying through the only policy for us. I tell you frankly that I can see none. We can spike our Nazis' guns by having a close economic and, if necessary, military co-operation with Germany. Our ingenuous fellows don't know what's going on in Berlin. But I know my Goering. On my very first visit to Berlin last November I saw what was wrong with our German brothers. Goering, together with the *Reichswehr* and above all with Blomberg, is quarreling with the radical hotheads. Don't let this go any further, but I received Goering's consent to do just as I like against our Nazis. He wants to get together with us in economic and military matters. He needs our raw material for his Four-Year Plan, and Germany needs us altogether if she is seriously going to settle her account with the Czechs. The Chancellor is not quite ready for this. Kienboeck is always worrying him about the exchange balance. He's frightened for his beloved 'Alpine Dollar.' Jansa² is being difficult too, and so is our worthy friend Hornbostel. . . . Well, well, you've all got the same opinion of him as I have, but at the moment he's got an anti-Hitler complex. But I can state it as my firm conviction that we can work well with the Third Reich if we set about it in the right way. None of the difficulties which have arisen with the Treaty of July 11th need have happened. I didn't make that Treaty. If I had it would have been drawn up better. But Austria will yet be very grateful to me for my policy. Our line is clear: we must

¹ Goering's country house outside Berlin.

² Chief of the Austrian General Staff.

remain true to our co-operation with Berlin and lean firmly on Italy. Mussolini hasn't abandoned us. So long as I have a say in the matter there will be no other guarantee of Austria's independence."

There was a certain amount of surprise but no contradiction. It was seen at once that Guido Schmidt had just propounded a policy which was inextricably bound up with his own personal situation. Contradiction would only irritate unnecessarily and would not change his views.

Friends of the Chancellor tried for some time, even after the world Press had already cast serious doubts on Guido Schmidt's political loyalty to Schuschnigg, to interpret his relations with his Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on sentimental grounds. His friends explained the trust which the Chancellor placed in his colleague, in spite of many warnings, in a somewhat involved way: "The Chancellor should not himself engage in his scheme of carrying through his German policy. There is too much risk attached. If he does so, with all its unavoidable consequences, and if it should fail, he can no longer remain in office. Then he would not be free to seek support or shelter from any other direction, for example in his talks with Hodza. So there must be a specialist on the policy of July 11th in the Government. If all goes well he will share the glory with the Chancellor. If it goes badly he will go into the desert as a scapegoat. Guido Schmidt is playing this friend's part with full knowledge and the consciousness of the alternative. He is of entirely the same opinion as the Chancellor and is a thoroughly reliable man."

This interpretation is not reconcilable with the picture of Guido Schmidt's character. It also contradicts the doubts which crept more and more into the Chancellor's mind regarding his colleague's loyalty, and which he tried his hardest to suppress. Guido Schmidt's personal ambition would never have allowed him to think of sacrificing himself for another's policy. He had gone behind Schuschnigg's back to Papen and had talked with the German Ambassador of ways and means to win over the Chancellor for a "stirring up" of the Treaty of Friendship and

a policy of co-operation with Berlin which would go beyond that of the 11th July. It is uncertain how much Schuschnigg knew of the intimacy between Papen and Schmidt. But it is known that Guido Schmidt had his own plans and his own policy. He was prepared to make Austria a vassal State of Germany both from an economic and military point of view if there were no other way of purchasing Austria's internal politics. And one would be wronging him if it were asserted that he could envisage a correct Austrian policy without a Chancellor Guido Schmidt. So he championed a policy with all his might, one which the Chancellor carried out with distaste and against all his personal inclinations, only because he thought it the lesser of two evils. Whenever Kurt von Schuschnigg was on the point of changing his course because he saw the uselessness of trying to come to a reconciliation with National-Socialism, Guido Schmidt was on the spot to instill new hope in him on the possibilities which were still open from Berlin. It was no coincidence that Herr von Papen always happened to call on the Chancellor at such critical times and that he held out false promises which fitted in with the "information" of the Secretary of State.

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Immediately after the murder of the Austrian Chancellor, Dollfuss, and the suppression of the National-Socialist *putsch* of the 25th July 1934, a suggestion was made to the new Chief of the Austrian Government for the preparation of a plebiscite to strengthen the will of the Austrian people for independence. Schuschnigg turned this suggestion down. He knew quite well that this was the right moment for it, but he did not see the possibility of finding the right formula on which the entire non-National-Socialist Austria might be united in opinion—this was barely six months after February. Later on the proposal was negated again, because meanwhile it had become the demand of the National-Socialists and was always being urged by German statesmen when coming in contact with their Austrian colleagues. It was thought in Vienna that there were sufficient reasons to fear a barrage of German propaganda which would prevent individual Austrians from deciding of their own free

will or allowing them to consider the matter clearly, whether from mass-suggestion, intimidation or sheer fright. Apart from the difficulties of internal unity, there were other reasons for negating the proposal, such as uncertainty on the standpoint of the Socialist and Communist groups and the impossibility of bringing together the *Heimwehr* and the Left Wing and also the working classes on a common ground. So Schuschnigg kept to the method of indirect plebiscite, the collection of as wide circles of the population as possible into the Patriotic Front. But these methods had their disadvantages in that they gave the National-Socialists the chance of employing the tactics of the "Trojan horse," that is to say the mass entry of their supporters into the Patriotic Front in order to cripple it from within. It soon had to be acknowledged that the actual fact of belonging to the Patriotic Front was by no means a criterion for the true patriotic feelings of the individual member, that, in fact, it was becoming more and more a cloak for the enemies of the regime. On this account the Chancellor found himself forced in his Innsbruck speech of the 19th September 1937 to make an announcement which he had foreshadowed in his speech at Graz on March 5th of the same year, that from November 1st the membership ranks of the Patriotic Front would be closed. This was supplemented by the Front's general secretary, Secretary of State Zernatto, in an announcement of a "purge" of the party after the closure had been applied. No inner political defense measure of Schuschnigg's Government had so excited the National-Socialists as this attempt to put a stop to the disablement of the Patriotic Front from within. They said that it was sheer sabotage of the recently instituted People's Political Reporters. One of the most insistent demands of the Berchtesgaden ultimatum was, on this account, to be the reopening of the Front.

A year after the conclusion of the July agreement, all responsible circles in Austria were convinced that the so-called Treaty of Austro-German Friendship must end in catastrophe unless the damaging effect on the patriotic feelings of the people by carrying it through, were checked. At least this was so with

regard to the policy of Austrian independence so far as it affected the people. It was impossible for the forces opposing National-Socialism to be bound to an armistice whilst the National-Socialist forces continued their fight undisturbed, under the guise of a "United Germany" movement blessed by the powers that be. The great mass of non-politically-minded people, the waverers and the procrastinators, who empirically always join the side where the most movement is to be seen, were not to be held in the Austrian Front by mere defensive tactics. Only counterattack could bring salvation. It was possible and presented great scope. For, in spite of the opportunities which National-Socialism had opened for itself by the July agreement, the majority of the Austrian people were disinclined to join the National-Socialist camp. Most of the Austrian working classes were immune from National-Socialist propaganda, for their trade union and political schooling guarded them against it. Certainly amongst the unemployed and in one or two industrial districts such as Steiermark, inroads of National-Socialism were to be found, but numerically they fell before the firm attitude of the majority. This majority did not stand behind Schuschnigg's Government but had either remained true to the Socialist Party even after it had been made illegal, or had taken up a waiting, neutral policy, ready to fight for greater influence on their country's fate either in Council or in the Social Labor Association (S.A.G.) in the Patriotic Front; in which connection they were increasingly looking to the Legitimist movement.

Most of the Austrian peasants, particularly the older generation, resisted the attractions of National-Socialism or were indifferent. There were exceptions, and these generally were to be found in the districts of Kärnten and Steiermark, the mountain peasants of the Tyrol and Salzburg, the centers of the foreign tourist traffic so affected by the cessation of German visitors. The peasant population of Lower Austria and, to a lesser degree, also Upper Austria were on the whole faithful to the Government. The lower middle class of the towns were National-Socialist, in Vienna less than in the provinces. Thus it might be said that the National-Socialist-minded were the managers of busi-

nesses and banks, manual laborers and small shopkeepers. Other supporters of National-Socialism were the big capitalists, industrialists, bank directors, and a large proportion of the "intelligentsia," particularly the "semi-educated": technicians, engineers, chemists, veterinary surgeons, and naturally also the Professors in universities and colleges, and those who had been outstripped by Jewish competition, the "Aryan" doctors and lawyers and the German-National judges and officials. But in all these strata there was a strongly minded anti-National-Socialist minority: most of the believing, practicing Catholics under the leadership of the clergy (amongst whom those with National-Socialist sympathies were the exception) and those who were in the Legitimist movement. These, added to the majority of workpeople and peasants, gave an incontestable superiority in numbers waiting to be politically awakened and led into the battle for Austria. But how could it succeed with a Patriotic Front condemned to inactivity, a working class unsatisfied even in its least demands, a peasant organization confined to purely economic interests, a Legitimist Party prevented from pursuing its business freely, and with no counter-propaganda being carried out vigorously according to Austrian and European ideas? So at the turn of the years 1937-1938 the general feeling amongst the patriotic people was that matters would have to come to a decisive action. The same feeling was born simultaneously in the other camp, the far side of the German border. But from totally different motives.

III

DIFFICULTIES COMPEL ACTION

THOSE FRIENDS of the Austrian Chancellor with whom he spoke confidentially during the latter months of 1937 found him obsessed by the fear of some belligerent action being taken by Germany against Austria. An invasion by German troops, whether preceded by a Nazi *putsch* in Austria itself or not, was certainly within the bounds of possibility and might be undertaken at any moment. Schuschnigg was convinced that the Western Powers would not come to Austria's aid. His views on Italian action to support Austria's independence varied according to the news he received from Rome, but on the whole he was very skeptical. To justify his pessimism he would produce a document which had been given to him confidentially: the memorandum of the Rhenish-Westphalian industries in the spring of 1937 which gave strong economic reasons as the basis for demonstrating how hopeless it was to attempt to find a way out of the German situation, but which at the same time expressed the conviction that the evidence they cited would not lead to any change in the basic lines of German policy and economics as laid down by the National-Socialist regime.

"Hitler is in a position which he cannot hold much longer," the Chancellor would say. "The difficulties he is meeting with are piling up and he will have to make a spring forwards and at least make a show of victory which will act as a temporary stimulant to the moral forces of the German people. But he

cannot seek this victory where there is too great a risk of war, a risk he has to run with every future action. My view is that the only way he can act is against our poor little Austria."

The memorandum from the Rhenish-Westphalian Industries, of which, amongst others, both Schacht and Papen knew before it was circulated, was carefully worded it is true, but it stated clearly that the "autarchy" aimed at by National-Socialist economic policy, which was essential if Germany was to visualize the possibility of a war of long duration, was a Utopian dream. The requirements in food and provisions, even in a year of normal harvest, showed a shortage of from 25 per cent to 30 per cent. A good harvest would cover the bread requirements, but would never provide a surplus. No rationing or restrictions could alter this fact. There would be an average shortage of raw materials of from 40 per cent to 60 per cent. Half Germany's requirements of iron would always have to be imported. Aluminium was the only metal of which there was a sufficient supply, and they only had two-thirds of the zinc needed, a bare half of the lead and only 10 per cent to 15 per cent of the copper. Other metals such as tin, nickel, chromium and wolfram were lacking in Germany completely. Further, the supply of natural and artificial petrol was very limited. About 10 per cent to 15 per cent of the requirements of synthetic rubber could be covered. As regards the textile industry, a wholesale raid on the German forests would only satisfy about 50 per cent of their need of cellulose. German exports averaged at the moment four milliards of Marks a year; but industry could only be carried on productively if this were to rise to ten or twelve milliards.

Twenty-five milliards of Marks had gone from the State emergency fund created by the National-Socialist regime, mostly in unproductive lines such as armament and fortifications. Bills issued by the State, that is to say to the Reichsbank, had been taken up by the banks and commercial undertakings before this credit inflation had time to grow into currency inflation. But this system came to the same thing as frozen capital, eating up the substance and reserves of the banks, that is, the German people's means. Unproductive investments, loss on ex-

port and expenditure for agrarian and raw material "autarchy" had already caused a rise in prices of 30 per cent to 35 per cent, to which should be added a rise in price of 10 per cent to 15 per cent due to the inferior quality of the goods. The rise in price must be supported, so the wages rate had to be raised and the German currency standard was approaching an acute danger point. Devaluation could at the best only give temporary assistance and would only provide a standard which, completely uncovered, would only represent 100 per cent at home. It would be blocked in foreign countries—the great danger to the extravagant. A clear balance could therefore not be drawn because there was no longer a State budget. No finality could be foreseen for the expenditure on military, naval and air armaments. A little time ago, to every twelve producing citizens, there was one consuming civil servant. Today, including party officials, semi-officials, and standing organizations there are eight citizens per civil servant. If the German economic situation were to be brought into line an end would have to be made to a condition in which 30 per cent to 35 per cent of the people's income of sixty millions is paid out to officialdom. The State would then have to stop its activity in certain economic fields and leave the initiative once more with the private concerns. Only after the rectifying of this situation, that is the drawing up of a balance which, moreover, would give a clear picture of the size of the debt, the burden of interest and a proposal of settlement, could Germany once again take her place in world trade. The following conditions were therefore to be fulfilled:—

- (1) The isolation of the then existing foreign debt, which amounted to ten milliards of Marks, from the normal trade and credit business.
- (2) The securing of new foreign credits for raw materials and food.
- (3) The securing of new foreign credits to establish a currency and exchange fund in order to cover the German debit balance and to stabilize the Mark.
- (4) The securing of definite market quotas for goods of German manufacture.

This memorandum, it is true, avoids political criticisms, but considers it necessary to state that the pre-conditions for the re-entry of Germany into normal international economic life would have to be, internally, the re-establishment of a legal State on a constitutional basis, and, externally, the entry of this State into an international system of Treaties and Peace. The assumption that other countries, in the interests of their own economic prosperity, could be forced to give assistance to Germany, is refuted.

In view of these perspectives and the omission, for obvious reasons, of a comparison with the facts of National-Socialist internal, foreign and economic policy, the memorandum closes with the following resigned phrase: "As at the moment there does not appear to be any possibility of such a far-reaching and fundamental reorganization of financial and economic affairs, the only course left for Germany is to leave the export possibilities, the credit system and currency parity as it now is."

* * *

That was the course, however, which business men, without prophesying an acute collapse, realized must be untenable in the long run. Their deep misgivings for the future were shared by leading military circles, who must have realized that German foreign politics had entered a zone of continual danger of war, but a war which could not be waged until German armament was completed and raw materials and provisions sufficient for at least two years accumulated. The Army was very restrained in its warnings for some time, because on the 7th March 1936 they were wrong and Hitler was right. But they must have thought that the real danger point would approach when the German policy of revision threatened the territorial *status quo* established in Europe by the Peace Treaty. The deductions to be drawn from the wars in Spain and China gave a lot of food for thought to those theorists who used to discuss these questions with relative freedom in their technical journals. In both theaters of war, the theory of a "lightning war" and the quick decisive result due to superiority of tanks and aeroplanes, was demolished. The defense of even a far less well-equipped opponent proved itself at least able to prolong the war indefinitely.

The tests of German war material in Spain showed that the high expectations were not fulfilled in several types of arms. Some German aeroplanes and their light tanks proved to be faultily designed, but the performance of their heavy artillery and above all their anti-aircraft guns gave great satisfaction. Once again the German optical trade was able to prove its superiority to foreign competition, as was proved by range-finders and direction-indicators. The experiences of the great autumn manoeuvres of 1937 were only partly satisfactory. The unpleasant discovery was made that synthetic petrol reduced the capacity of various mechanized units by one-third and affected the iron and steel portions of the machine. Serious doubts were felt for the first time regarding the superiority of the famous German "Iron-clad Divisions." In technical circles the question was asked whether the dreaded point of over-mechanization, which could put a whole army out of action, had been reached. They began to wonder what the "military stroll" into Austria would be like later on if the terrible winged dragon called the Iron-clad Divisions could become a difficult mobile instrument even without an enemy against them, for a fair percentage of breakdowns had crippled them badly. The hesitation of the French army leaders to imitate the Germans by creating iron-clad divisions, which was formerly ridiculed by the German leader as "reactionary," suddenly took on quite a different meaning. The French, instead of having completely mechanized units, favored light, mobile, partly mechanized divisions provided with heavy tank formations specially suitable to modern warfare.

But the real handicap was found to be the shortage of trained reserves. The superficial instruction which could be given during the time of German disarmament to those of military age, could not make up this shortage. The German General Staff does not think much of the value of the pseudo-military formations of the National-Socialist Party nor of the war games of the Hitler Youth. But the greatest of all weaknesses was the deficiency of officers. The reduction by one year of the school period in German *Gymnasias* (higher grade schools), and the recruiting for officers among those in their leaving-examination years is di-

rectly due to the conception of the urgency of the military situation. The Reich War Minister Blomberg, after a somewhat stormy interview with Hitler, flatly refused to introduce the Arya paragraph for senior officers so urgently demanded by the Party. Towards the end of his career, Blomberg was no longer the subservient man falling in with all the wishes of the National-Socialist Party. He had given invaluable service in the building-up of the Third Reich. It could be seen how he was coming more and more under the influence of the experts, notably the brilliant Commander-in-Chief of the Army, General Fritsch. In any case whenever a military crisis occurred, he always stated that Germany was not in a position to carry on a big war with any chance of success.

An impression was made in Berlin by Great Britain's arming and the strengthening and modernizing of the French Army, carried out with much thought and method. The Red Army also was judged by the German experts quite differently from its presentation by the National-Socialist daily papers. It was felt that this army had not remained untouched by the inner crisis of the Soviet regime, and that it had been weakened by the dismissal of some of its most capable leaders. But Berlin knew very well that the Russian Army at that time was the only one in Europe which could be compared with the German so far as its modern equipment was concerned, and the war potentialities of Russia were not under-estimated. There was no need to tell the German military experts that the Red Army was very different from the badly trained and badly armed force which Russia put into the field in 1914.

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"We cannot risk a war while we are unable to control the raw material and reserves of men in the whole of Central and South-East Europe, while we are uncertain of Italy's attitude and while we cannot expect from Poland at least friendly neutrality and the hindering of Russia from marching through that country," declared Blomberg during a discussion at the end of December 1937. Another pessimist was Freiherr von Neurath who was expressing his opinion much more freely at this time than he

was accustomed to do, and in whom none of his usual *bonhomie* was visible. His opinion was that the leading National-Socialists, who unfortunately had Hitler's ear even in foreign politics, under-estimated the resistance and the growing antipathy of the Western Powers. The plan emanating from the Brown House was too simple to bring about a successful result. The world, and Europe in particular, was watching them much more attentively than two, or even one year ago. Hitler could not remain unaffected by the statements made by the Generals, so he too did not want a war. But since no other suggestions were forthcoming by which the other Powers, particularly England and the United States, might be attracted, and from which they might extract some political concessions, there was only one thing left to do and that was to continue with the method hitherto employed: Bluff. But that could only go on so long as the others did not see that it *was* bluff. The Reich would have to back out as soon as it met with any real resistance. National-Socialist foreign policy certainly stood a chance with one or two of the smaller States which were particularly affected by the power of Germany's rearmament and were also dependent economically on Germany. But the German policy of pressure on these States must in the long run bring about a reaction on the other Powers and on that account might lead to serious failure. It was said, for instance, that England and France had been very active in Rumania and had threatened to reply to the formation of Goga's Cabinet, so friendly to Germany, with certain measures, before which King Carol had had to capitulate. Von Neurath went on to say that it was well known that he had repeatedly tried to guide German foreign policy into other channels, but unfortunately he had the feeling that he had not been listened to lately so much as he used to be. In certain matters he had been passed over altogether and a few more obliging gentlemen had been found for the Foreign Office. The Foreign Minister was alluding to his own son-in-law, Secretary of State von Mackenson, son of the Field-Marshal, who on Ribbentrop's advice was brought back from his position in the Budapest Embassy to the Wilhelmstrasse, because he appeared to be the right

man to carry the wishes of the Party through both the old diplomatic circles and the nobility.

Freiherr von Neurath then got on to the subject of Austria. He thought that he was in agreement with the leaders of the Reich Army in carrying on the tradition of Bismarck's diplomacy in connection with that country, which was to leave Austria her independence but to draw her into the Reich's sphere of influence. This tradition had not been unsuccessful after 1866 and in the time of the Triple Alliance. Little Austria of today seemed to be admirably suited to be the "brilliant second" to the Reich. The closest co-operation with Austria in foreign politics, military and economic matters seemed to him to be vastly preferable to a compulsory *Anschluss* which one did not know for sure would work smoothly and which might cause bitter feelings in some of the Austrian people. But here again the gentleman of the N.S.D.A.P. thought differently. Recently Goering, whom he had always looked upon as a follower of the Bismarck line of thought as regards Austria, had also swung round. Austria now offered the classic example for National-Socialist principles, to work everywhere with the "Trojan horse" method, and obtain a few strongholds within the opponent's own country. The recipe had been worked out by his latest and youngest "colleague"—the Foreign Minister spoke these words with the utmost irony—Secretary of State Bohle. Other countries were also to be saturated, as Austria, with National-Socialist ideas. This in the long run could only bring forth counteraction.

He was of the opinion that in any case things looked very black for Austria. He knew of the plans for the seizure of power by Austrian National-Socialism, after the authority of the Viennese Government had been undermined. In view of the political tension in Austria, an Austrian 30th June must then take place—if not worse. It was generally said in leading National-Socialist circles that the unity of the Reich would only have found tangible expression when the Viennese Jews and the Austrian priests were ceremoniously locked up in the Dachau Concentration Camp.

He considered that the view held by certain people in the

Wilhelmstrasse was wrong, namely: If we have Austria, then Hungary will eat out of our hand. This type of German policy in the Danube territory would not work in Hungary. Such high-handed methods, even after an effacement of Austria from the map of Europe, temporary only perhaps, could but do the Reich harm. If an understanding with England were really wanted, then Hungary must not be handled too roughly. The Brown House at Munich still toyed with the idea of getting the whole of the Danube and the Balkan area under German dominion. This would be public recognition of the new realistic policy which so startled the Southern States by the formation of the Rome-Berlin Axis. The Reich had obviously played the wrong card both in its policy regarding the independence of the Danube States and in its vacillating attitude towards England. Nor could everything be done just by exploiting the fear of Bolshevism. The internal political changes in some of the Balkan States should not be overestimated. England and France still had many trump cards to play.

Perhaps with luck a penetration of the Sudeten German districts with the National-Socialist spirit might be successful and lead to the foreign political isolation of Czechoslovakia. It all depended on how free a hand was allowed by England. The British had their troubles in the Mediterranean, but neither they nor the pressure being exerted on England from the Near and Far East were sufficient to force London to grant all these concessions. The Anglo-French-Russian alliance probably went a good deal further than they in the Brown House seemed to think. That was why von Neurath was a pessimist also when in Hitler's entourage the hope was expressed of smashing the French system of alliances and isolating her. But unfortunately Messrs. Rosenberg and Ribbentrop, who had just exhibited their complete incompetence in London, had their own views and were willingly listened to in higher quarters. Von Neurath did not conceal the fact that in view of this state of affairs he was beginning to get very tired of his job and was thinking seriously of retiring.

The Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed himself in

similar terms in Conservative circles whose dislike of National-Socialism was well known. His statements also came to the knowledge of the Austrian Government, confirming the information they had received from other sources of the approach of a serious crisis in the Third Reich.

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The opinion of the situation held by German diplomats of the old school may be seen from a frank discussion held by an active German diplomat in Paris with an Austrian colleague. This conversation took place at the end of November 1937. The German diplomat first expressed the opinion that an understanding could be arrived at with France on the colonial question if her safety on the Continent could be guaranteed for ten years. Things were not quite so simple where England was concerned. This was chiefly to be blamed on Ribbentrop who had seriously harmed Anglo-German relations by his impossible behavior and the stupidities he had committed in London. If it had not been for Ribbentrop, the colonial question would probably have been settled long ago. The Duce's intervention in favor of the German demand for colonies had also complicated matters, for the English were always suspicious when there appeared to be co-operation between Italy and Germany. Unfortunately Mussolini always managed to fall into Berlin's traps.

The German diplomat then spoke of the report he had received from the Wilhelmstrasse about the visit of Lord Halifax to Berlin and Berchtesgaden. He characterized it as: a lot of words, but no meaning. Hitler's declarations to Halifax were the usual Hitler tirade. Of course Germany had no aggressive intentions in Central Europe. France wanted to yoke Poland for the benefit of Czechoslovakia; the French Foreign Minister Delbos would certainly work to this end during his forthcoming visit to Central and Eastern Europe. Since the 7th March 1936 and in consequence of the efficiency of German anti-aircraft guns as proved in Spain, France no longer was able to intervene directly on Czechoslovakia's behalf. But Poland would not march; a Polish colleague in Paris had told him so. Naturally Germany did not want to seize Czechoslovakia but it was quite

possible that unrest might break out there. It all depended on how long it lasted. If Prague dealt with it promptly, then everything would be all right. If it dragged on, then France might try and intervene.

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Towards the end of 1937, rumors began to take a more definite form that there were serious differences amongst the leaders of the Third Reich and a consequent increase of dissension amongst the German people. News which reached the Austrian Government at this time spoke of a breach between the *Reichswehr* and the S.S., of acts of sabotage in German aerodromes and growing dissatisfaction in Conservative circles. The differences between the Army and the Party were based principally on Austria. S.S. and S.A. were for prompt invasion, whilst the leaders of the Army were against an *Anschluss* and in favor of the closest co-operation with Austria in economic and military matters.

This information showed up von Papen's activities in another light. The German Ambassador in Vienna was one of those who in the latent conflict had put their faith in the Army. He tried to draw Secretary of State Schmidt into this game. In the summer of 1937, Papen's secretary, Freiherr von Ketteler, had expressed himself very freely to an adherent of the Legitimist movement. Papen had then interrupted his summer holiday and, somewhat surprisingly, returned to Vienna. Ketteler said that the purpose of this interruption of his holiday was to get in touch with Austrian military circles and the Secretary of State, Schmidt. The German Ambassador was trying to arrange as close a contact as possible between the German and the Austrian armies. He would have been specially pleased if this contact could have been made with the circle around Blomberg. In the forthcoming Austro-German conversations, Austria would then have the support of the military in Berlin against the Party.

It has already been shown that Papen had Guido Schmidt's complete agreement to such a plan. The journeys to Berlin by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in order to meet Goering were arranged by Papen, and were based on the presumption that it was possible to win over the most important

man in the State after Hitler himself for the *Reichswehr* and against the Party. Schmidt impressed on Goering over and over again, that Austria herself wished to have ever closer relations with the Reich and that Italy's mediation to that end was unnecessary.

For a time, till December 1937, Goering was actually in favor of such a policy because he considered it most important to tie up Austria to such an extent that he could make use of her products (timber, iron, cattle) in the development of the German Four-Year Plan and at the same time gain her military support against Czechoslovakia. He influenced Hitler to this line of thought also. In September 1937, Guido Schmidt had told the members of the Austrian delegation to the League of Nations that Goering, on the occasion of Schmidt's visit to Schorfheide, had said that it was an injustice to Hitler to say that he had any inimical feelings towards Austria. Hitler never had any idea of attacking Austria from feelings of anger or revenge. Certainly Hitler showed a great interest in Austria and was particularly hurt when his followers in that country were persecuted. But this interest was only due to an overwhelming love for the country of his birth. Hitler did not feel himself to be merely an Austrian but, as he had so often said, to be the best and only true Austrian. Chancellor Schuschnigg was to hear this statement from Hitler's own lips in a dramatic moment five months later. Goering also told Guido Schmidt that Hitler's latest hobby-horse was the development of Vienna to "the greatest German center of culture." At the same time a leader of the French diplomatic corps said that he had heard from Hitler's closest entourage that the Führer was occupying his leisure hours working on plans for the rebuilding of Vienna. For this purpose he had had constructed a large relief map of the city with models on pins, and was spending hours moving the models here and there.

Secretary of State Guido Schmidt did not take warning from such news. All his conversations with Goering were always taken as encouragement to a closer co-operation with Germany. When he found Schuschnigg worried over the Reich's intentions

towards Austria, he strongly advised the Chancellor to exercise great care and avoid everything which might annoy his co-signatory to the July agreement. And he always came back to hinting at the opportunities offered by working with Papen, Schmidt and the *Reichswehr*.

Whenever he was able, he fought and sabotaged from his office all Schuschnigg's efforts to assist the policy of Austria's independence through closer co-operation with the other Danube States. It was well known in the Ballhausplatz that the close friendship between Guido Schmidt and the Chancellor had not prevented the Secretary of State from carrying through his own policy. Especially Hornbostel had not the slightest illusions regarding the views and intentions of the young and ambitious head of the Foreign Office. He remembered only too well a conversation which took place in September 1936, also in Geneva, to which he was a silent listener. On that occasion Guido Schmidt in one of his animated and talkative moods had told two of his intimate colleagues that he could quite well understand the attitude of a large part of Austrian youth towards the *Anschluss*. Austria in its present form was not an ideal which could inspire youth with enthusiasm. But Austria's so-called Danube Mission, that is the tradition of the Danube Monarchy, had now been made entirely impossible by Hungary's uncertain and not too straightforward attitude. If National-Socialism had not been at the helm in Germany, probably the whole of Austria would have been won for the *Anschluss* long ago.

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Whilst an outspoken defeatist feeling ruled in Vienna amongst those in authority, and the Chancellor could not make up his mind to profit by the signs of internal weakness in the Third Reich by taking energetic action for stronger insistence on Austria's independence, the thoughts of Hitler and his closest colleagues circled more and more round Austria, precisely because of those very weaknesses, from which he had to find a way out. War was out of the question, but, on the other hand, it was obvious that some great and successful stroke which did not involve war was necessary. So the tactics of bluff and intimi-

dation would have to continue. The only point to be decided was on whom those tactics could be used with the best results. Hitler himself decided how they were to work in relation to foreign countries. There was to be concealed activity by the National-Socialist propaganda office to bring about a reinstatement of relations with sympathetic circles in foreign countries and thus occupy the internal politics of as many as possible and awaken a feeling of uncertainty everywhere. This was to bring continual small successes to the Reich and above all give time to complete arming and to make arrangements for supplies in case of war. But it would also cheer up the German people. Schuschnigg was right when he said that Austria would have to be the sacrifice. First of all those men in leading positions in Germany's military and diplomatic services from whom opposition to a policy of aggression against Austria was to be expected, must be cleared out. Hitler began to make himself familiar with the idea that another, but this time bloodless, 30th June was unavoidable, and this was to be followed a few days later by a foreign political diversion in the form of an internal political "purge." Goering's change of front had been responsible for hastening this development. For some time he had seriously thought of an alliance between the Army leaders and the Conservative circles, but gave this up owing to the opposition of these to his Four-Year Plan and the realization that the establishment of an open or secret military dictatorship would be the first step to the collapse of the National-Socialist regime. Goering felt very offended at the condemnation of his military capabilities so freely expressed by the Generals, which naturally reached the ears of the "strong man." From the turn of the year it was he who urged Hitler to energetic action and thenceforward acted as the driving power.

"The attitude of the people, the incipient social unrest and the resistance of the industrialists and certain sections of the Army, to our political leadership requires a counter stroke. If we do not act soon, it may be too late." This was the refrain which Hitler heard in every conversation with his colleagues. And however much discord there may have been and however much they may have appeared to hate each other, on this point they were united:

Goering, Goebbels, Ribbentrop, Himmler, Hess and Rosenberg. Alone in Berchtesgaden the Führer began to weave great plans. He is a sensitive instrument for registering the mood and feelings of a people and once again he was convinced that the time to act had arrived and any hesitation might cause the still manageable difficulties to get out of hand.

Adolf Hitler resolved to face up to the solution of the Austrian question.

IV

ON GUARD FOR EUROPE

IMMEDIATELY after the conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship in July 1936, Adolf Hitler had informed Chancellor Schuschnigg that he would like to have a talk with him and looked forward to a visit from the Head of the Austrian Government to Berchtesgaden. Schuschnigg had refused this invitation, because, quite rightly, he was of the opinion that the signing of the agreement with the Third Reich had added quite sufficient grounds for speculation by Austrian public opinion and the world in general and that this question must be allowed to settle down before any sign of greater intimacy were given. Further he thought he could guess the only reason that Hitler could have for desiring a personal meeting at that moment. Ever since March 1936, that is since the reoccupation of the Rhineland and the certain knowledge that the Western Powers were not prepared to stand up to Hitler at the risk of a war, Vienna had been expecting the Reich to strike in the South-East, either against Austria or Czechoslovakia. The attack on Czechoslovakia had come appreciably nearer now that a Treaty had been made with Austria which should ensure peace for a certain time at least. So the Chancellor was not surprised to hear, from one person and another, that enquiries were being made as to Austria's possible participation in action directed to dividing up Czechoslovakia. The confidants of the Austrian Government, the Legitimist movement in Budapest, announced that the Hun-

garian Government, and especially the Regent Horthy, under great German pressure, had agreed to take part in an advance on Prague. It was known in Vienna that Horthy was very favorably inclined to such a plan. The temptation was very great for Austria also. The Secretary of State, Schmidt, did all he could to convince the Chancellor that the position of Czechoslovakia had become untenable since the 7th March and that Austria must come in with the Party if only for the sake of self-preservation.

The German plan quickly took concrete form. During his talks with Guido Schmidt, Goering had never made any secret of the fact that Papen was pulling every possible string to get Austria to collaborate, and even Italy let it be known that she would assist to a certain degree. It was soon realized in the Ballhausplatz that the Little Entente, the alliance directed against the Hungarian policy of revision, would not intervene in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia.

The Italian-Yugoslav understanding was an indication of the complete change of relations which was taking place on the Danube with such rapidity. For years France had tried in vain to reconcile Jugoslavia with Italy. During Laval's visit to Rome in January 1935, the most he was able to achieve was to obtain Mussolini's consent to consider the problem favorably. He had not insisted further and so did not follow the lines of his predecessor at the Quai d'Orsay, Barthou, who had just resolved to bring about a rapprochement between Rome and Belgrade by French intervention, when he was killed by an assassin's bullet. The Franco-Italian agreement of January 1935 certainly provided for co-operation in South-East Europe and the Danube Basin, but did not expressly mention Italian-Yugoslav relations. Now the reconciliation between Rome and Belgrade had come about directly. The Yugoslav Prime Minister, fully protected by the Prince Regent Paul, had taken as his example the Polish Foreign Minister Beck. The agreement with France ceased to be the main point in Jugoslavia's foreign policy and merely became an insurance in case of war and any aggressive signs by Germany in South-Eastern Europe. But for peace-time, Stoyad-

inowitsch worked for friendly relations with Berlin as with Rome, which was not difficult to achieve in view of the "cancellation" of the policy of collective security and the conclusion of an economic agreement with Germany for close co-operation. Austria was no hindrance in this path. The traditional Yugoslav policy, to prevent a Hapsburg Restoration at all costs—even at the cost of an *Anschluss*—proved to be the connecting link between Berlin and Belgrade.

Counter moves by French diplomacy were not crowned with success. Yugoslavia and Rumania vigorously opposed the plan to expand the Little Entente and the agreements of its members with France by concluding a pact of mutual support. The Yugoslav Ambassador in Paris, Puritsch, told an Austrian colleague in November 1937, that he had represented to the Quai d'Orsay that the conclusion of such a pact would have been an insane act for Belgrade and would have been a provocation to Germany and Italy.

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The game that was being played in the Danube Basin by the Great Powers was very easy to see through. Germany had taken up once more the traditional imperialistic pre-war policy. The co-operation of Vienna, and the elimination of the obstacle presented by Prague, were to open the road to Hungarian grain, Rumanian petroleum and the political mastery of the Near East. Italy, still resolved at that time to support Austria's independence, favored, more from tactical than practical reasons, all that gave the impression of leading to the isolation of Czechoslovakia. The settling of Austro-German relations might appear to the world to be the first step in this direction. The Italian-Yugoslav rapprochement and the establishment of a very friendly atmosphere between Belgrade and Berlin completed the picture. On the whole conditions between Yugoslavia and Hungary had also improved. Further, the extension of the Polish-Rumanian alliance, the strong interest shown in Hungary by the Poles and the firm refusal of their Foreign Minister, Beck, to discuss the clearing-up of Polish-Czechoslovak relations, were all on the same lines. For some time there was hope in Rome that the im-

proved Rumanian-Italian friendship—in co-operation with Warsaw—which was given a new lease of life after the fall of Titulescu, would form the corner stone of the building: Hungarian-Rumanian adjustment. Mussolini had set his heart on this, for the recognition of his Abyssinian conquest and the settlement of the Mediterranean question as Italy wished it would be indefinitely postponed should Germany move against Czechoslovakia. The Duce knew that in such a case he would receive the greatest concessions from the Western Powers.

France, as protector of the Little Entente, had been the directing Power in the Danube Basin for many years, and since the establishment of the Third Reich and Germany's rearmament she had felt the necessity for strengthening this position. Barthou had given this matter his special attention. The German-Polish agreement was the first breach in the French alliance and security system. This breach was more than filled in by the swinging of Soviet Russia from the revisionist to the anti-revisionist front. The conclusion of the Franco-Russian pact indicated that all danger was past since, in view of Russia's influence in spite of her Communist regime, she was the greatest Slav power and competitor of Germany in Eastern Europe, and thus the policy of collective security was strengthened.

But the situation was changed by many things: Italy's break with the Western Powers, the Anglo-Italian controversy, the defeat of the League of Nations in their policy of sanctions, the indications of German-Italian co-operation, and above all the attitude of Great Britain and France after March 7th. The very clever use made by German propaganda of the natural dislike of Communism by the Central and South-Eastern European States, saw to the rest. There must have been the feeling in Paris that of all her allies, the only one on which France could depend was Czechoslovakia. So much greater, therefore, was the need of the French diplomatic service to urge on a reconciliation with Italy on the one hand, and on the other to unite not only the Little Entente, which was becoming more and more fictional, but all the States of the Danube Basin, into one front to defend their independence against the newly-awakened German Imperialism.

So every step was welcomed in Paris which seemed to point to a closer friendship between the States of the Little Entente and those of the Rome Protocols, that is to say Austria and Hungary.

At first sight it would be thought that a parallel might be drawn between French and Italian interests. Parisian circles friendly to Italy did not fail to emphasize this parallel as necessary and natural. But they found themselves up against the very anti-Italian feeling of the French Lefts and the attitude of the Quai d'Orsay towards the British opposition to Italy and, above all, to Mussolini's own policy, which was to use every possible opportunity which might lead to co-operation with Germany.

So, about the time of the Austro-German Treaty of Friendship, the position was that it actually only needed Austria's agreement to put the seal on Czechoslovakia's fate. But Schuschnigg was opposed to the plan. It must not be forgotten that at that time, the summer and autumn of 1936, there was a widely spread erroneous idea in Central Europe that France, which was going through a bad series of strikes, was on the verge of a civil war. So far as Spain was concerned, a fairly quick success was to be envisaged for the troops sent out by Germany and Italy. Great Britain was only just beginning to arm and had plainly said that she did not feel herself prepared to enter a European conflict. In Russia the series of spectacular prosecutions against leading men of the Communist Party, the Soviet administration and the Red Army, had begun, which was taken to indicate serious internal trouble.

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It was at this moment that concrete plans for common action against Czechoslovakia were put before the Austrian Government in an unofficial way. The southern districts of Bohemia, up to Budweis, were to be the reward for Austria's collaboration in such an action. Germany wanted the rest of Bohemia for herself, also a large part of Moravia and a piece of Slovakia. Hungary was to have all Slovakia with the exception of the district of Zips taken by Germany. Poland would have Carpathian Russia and that part of the former Austrian Silesia colonized by

Poland and given to Czechoslovakia under the Peace Treaty. Strategically, the mechanized portion of the Austrian Army was to invade from the South towards Prague, the Germans through Silesia and the Hungarians, with a strong force of cavalry, were to enter by the valleys parallel to the Waag in the district of Donauknies. The Governments of Hungary and Poland had agreed to this plan—with the exception of the Hungarian Foreign Minister, M. de Kanya, who opposed it. He was convinced that Czechoslovakia would not be left without assistance and that a European war would ensue, a risk which Hungary could not afford to take. Since the Horthy-Hitler conversation which took place on the 22nd August 1936, on the occasion of the Regent's visit to Berchtesgaden, Kanya had twice sent in his resignation. The subjects discussed during the conversation were a plan of attack on Czechoslovakia and the scheme for the partition of the country; although none of the technical staff was there, there was great precision of detail. Kanya's resignation was not accepted on either occasion, for, in the meantime, the Prime Minister, M. Daranyi himself and the influential leaders of the Opposition, Count Bethlen and Tibor Eckardt, had announced their agreement with Kanya. The Austrian Chancellor must have realized what he was doing when he wrecked this plan by entering into an open policy of agreement with Prague, which was surely informed of the German intentions by the Ballhausplatz. Not only did he thus wreck the policy of the Third Reich, but also Mussolini's tactics, which, in view of his position with the Western Powers, did not favor any Austro-Czechoslovak co-operation except in purely economic matters.

The plans for the partition of Czechoslovakia were again discussed at the Conference of the States of the Rome Protocols which took place in Vienna on the 11th and 12th November 1936. It was the Austrian Chancellor who raised the question and emphasized that the Austrian Government was firm in its decision to have nothing whatsoever to do with such a project under any circumstances. The Chancellor was of the same opinion as Kanya, that it was quite on the cards that France would fulfill her alliance obligations towards Czechoslovakia, in which

case a European war would be unavoidable. Austria, he added, had a mission as a go-between and a guardian of the peace and for this reason alone must oppose, with the diplomatic possibilities open to it, any policy of aggression.

In a renewed debate the Austrian Government took up the same position. Therefore practical considerations confirmed the Chancellor's principles. The tremendous risk of a European war was envisaged. He was also convinced that the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia with Austria's connivance—and in the unlikely event of Prague receiving no assistance from the Western Powers or Russia, it would be unable to offer any long or serious resistance—far from guaranteeing Austria's independence, would on the contrary indicate her as the victim of the next attack. With Bohemia and the surrounding districts, the Third Reich would of necessity get control of Central and South-East Europe. If the Western Powers did not see their way to prevent the invasion or partition of Czechoslovakia, they certainly would not lift a finger to help Austria. The position of Italy towards a Germany which had gradually become all-powerful in the Danube Basin could be none other than that of a second-rate Power. So by taking part in a plan to efface Czechoslovakia, Austria could only hope to prolong but not save her independence.

But quite apart from these political considerations, a man such as Schuschnigg would never have lent a hand to an action which was directed against the independence of a European State. Whilst understanding certain German desires for revision, and in spite of his refusal to identify Austria's peace policy with support of the *status quo* established by the Peace Treaties, the Chancellor had a very keen conception of European solidarity and the mission of the League of Nations. He was not thinking only of Austria, he was thinking also of Europe when he balked the German plans against Czechoslovakia. On this occasion Guido Schmidt could not carry through his opposing views. He, quite unburdened by ideology, could only see the prospects and possibilities of the moment.

Much as Schuschnigg was anxious to make great concessions

towards "German peace," he nevertheless had a clear conception of the limits of these concessions. To collaborate in a German foreign policy directed against the peace of Europe was, in his eyes, a concession which was out of the question for Austria. In view of the later results of Vienna's refusal to take part in the policy against Czechoslovakia, it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that Austria could have saved her independence, temporarily at any rate, had she taken up a different attitude; which is as much as saying that she sacrificed her very existence for Europe and Czechoslovakia. At least the sequence of aggression would have been different had Kurt von Schuschnigg given in to the perpetual pressure by Guido Schmidt and the whisperings of Herr von Papen. Yes, possibly even, the Austrian sacrifice may have been of decisive importance, because it gave Europe the necessary pause which at least Great Britain needed in order to arm. After the Third Reich, by the annexation of Austria, had so to speak carried out its Dress Rehearsal, it was far easier for the Western Powers to stand firm on the actual First Night, the march on Czechoslovakia, and to take their countermeasures in good time.

Obviously Guido Schmidt had hoped to the last that he would be able to bring his game to a successful end. He had repeatedly advised a march on Prague, expressing great skepticism of the preparedness of the Western Powers. Even in November 1937, after the Lille Congress of the French Radical Party at which the Foreign Minister, M. Delbos, had expressed himself strongly in favor of fulfilling France's obligations to Czechoslovakia, he got the Austrian Ambassador in Paris to find out how far France's readiness to intervene went. The Ambassador, Vollgrüber, was able to report that he had been told at the Quai d'Orsay that Delbos's statement that France would go to the help of Czechoslovakia "*qu'elle que soit la forme de l'aggression,*" was nothing new. France would have fulfilled her obligations even if unrest had broken out within Czechoslovakia, if there were any certainty of its having been influenced from outside. Whether this were so or not and whether she would come in or not, only France could decide.

When shortly before this Guido Schmidt (for the last time as responsible leader of the Austrian Foreign Office) had met Goering, the German "offer" of the closest military and economic co-operation and with it the complete "Nazification" of Austrian foreign politics was put in such an urgent and pressing form that he considered an official reply in the name of the Austrian Government to be necessary. At the beginning of December, after consultation with the Chancellor, this reply was sent in the form of a personal letter from Guido Schmidt to Goering. It contained a clear and definite refusal of the German proposals. Thereby the mechanism of the German action against Austria was first set in motion.

It was not easy for the Chancellor to pilot through a foreign policy which might give the impression that he had favored Czechoslovakia and her allies against the German Reich and the Rome-Berlin Axis. True, Schuschnigg had entirely refused to allow the question to be put in this way. But he could not prevent it being raised against him by German propaganda and by that section of the Austrian population which this propaganda reached.

Only time would show the patriotic Austrians that the resumption of an aggressive Prussian policy by the Third Reich had linked together the fate of Vienna and Prague in a way which had seemed ended for all time by the destruction of the Danube Monarchy and the post-war policy of the Little Entente. The founders of Czechoslovakia had not foreseen the Prussian danger. They considered good relations between Czechoslovakia and the Weimar Republic to be the natural thing, and to be quite independent of the internal political regime of the Reich. To their minds, working historically, Sudeten Germany might be an "Irredenta" to Vienna, but not to Berlin. So might the thesis arise: "Rather annexation than a Hapsburg." As far back as 1929, Masaryk had told a deputation of German Catholic journalists making an educational tour through Czechoslovakia, that that country's one political aim was "de-Austrianization." Certainly both Masaryk and Benes were convinced all the way through of the necessity for the close and friendly co-operation

of all Danubian States, but they had to reckon with Czech nationalism and on that account had to take up an attitude in economic policy which did not do justice to this solidarity.

The bitter feelings nursed in Austria against the Succession States were concentrated at times against Czechoslovakia, partly because of the special cultural and economic proximity of Vienna and Prague, which made any misunderstanding particularly noticeable.

A statesman of such prominence as Prelate Seipel did not let himself be led astray by this situation, and ostentatiously sought contact with Masaryk and Benes. But for the majority of Austrians things appeared differently. Moreover, in the internal contradictions of Austria which preceded the decisive conflict of February 1934 between the Dollfuss Government and the Social-Democrats, and immediately after this event, the sympathies of Czechoslovakia were unmistakably on the side of the Austrian Social-Democrats. Brünn, that is to say a Czechoslovak town, had become the center of propaganda by the Socialist emigrants against the Austrian Government.

Nevertheless the leaders in Prague as in Vienna found their way to each other in face of a common danger. For Schuschnigg it was particularly easy to get into touch with Prime Minister Hodza in view of the latter's political past. Plans for the reform of Austria-Hungary which before the war had been discussed by circles associated with the murdered Franz Ferdinand, that is to say by the circle to which Hodza had belonged, were not without influence on the so-called Hodza Plan for the co-operation of the Danube States. Schuschnigg, in this case a true follower of Seipel, had gladly agreed to this conception. There was no thought either in Prague or in Vienna of its being directed against Germany. But Berlin took it to be an effort to bar Germany's road to the South-East, and was enraged. On no other point was it more clearly shown that the German character of Austrian foreign policy, so emphasized in the Treaty of Friendship, was interpreted very differently by Schuschnigg and by his co-signatory. Whilst the Austrian Chancellor would not allow himself to be deprived of the right to determine what was in the

"all-German" interests and in which way Austria might best serve these interests, Berlin never thought that the identifying of German with National-Socialist might be a questionable point in this respect and that any interpretation of foreign policy might be allowed other than that laid down by Hitler and his advisers. The Third Reich felt that it was a frontal attack for Austria to endeavor, with Czechoslovakia and Hungary, to find a common platform for their immediate economic co-operation, which could be followed by a common political defense of the independence of the Danubian States against all the Great Powers.

Foreign countries had over-estimated the importance of the three-cornered Vienna-Prague-Budapest conversations and had thought that a concrete formula had been laid down whereas actually only an exchange of ideas had taken place. The unfathomable part played by Italy and Poland had helped to increase the confusion of ideas as to what actually was happening and also the aims pursued by the various Powers. Whilst Schuschnigg was negotiating with Prague and Budapest and offering his good services for a Czechoslovak-Magyar understanding (which on account of the liberal minority policy of Czechoslovakia may have appeared easier than an agreement between Budapest and Belgrade or even Budapest and Bucharest), Mussolini not only wished to reconcile Hungary with Yugoslavia and Rumania and to divert Hungary's whole pressure for revision on to Czechoslovakia, but was also trying to improve relations between Austria and Yugoslavia. Mussolini had long played with the idea of breaking the Little Entente by creating an agreement between Vienna, Budapest and Belgrade, and at the same time, by drawing Yugoslavia into the Rome Protocol system, forming a reserve block against Germany in case she should attack in the Danube Basin to the detriment of Italian interests. He developed this plan in detail during a conversation with Starhemberg and Berger-Waldenegg. In Venice, in April 1937, he was particularly emphatic on an Austro-Yugoslav pact. Twice Schuschnigg refused a direct suggestion from Italy to go to Belgrade. Incidentally the Yugoslav Government let it be

known that they did not attach much value to an improvement of relations with Vienna and therefore there was no point in a visit from the Austrian Chancellor. During the last few months before the annexation, relations between Austria and Yugoslavia were definitely bad. Several frontier incidents and the expulsion of Austrians from Yugoslav territory—which forced the Austrian Government to reprisals—shattered Mussolini's plans.

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How little Austria and Czechoslovakia were working together against Germany is proved by a very outspoken conversation which President Benes had with the Austrian Ambassador in Prague, Marek, on the 17th September 1937, that is during the time of the greatest activity in German diplomacy and when it had become obvious that Berlin had begun to make plans for a *coup* in the Danube Basin. The President first spoke of the Sudeten-German question and declared that he would not submit to pressure from other countries. But he was devoting himself to clearing up any matters which might lead to a conflict. A few days earlier he had received a letter from Henlein which had demanded that the President should abandon the theory of a National State and agree that Czechoslovakia should be regarded as a State of Nationalities. He was not going to reply to that letter. Henlein quite forgot that he, Benes, had never referred either publicly or privately to Czechoslovakia as a National State. This discussion had been brought about by Kramars who wished to have the conception of a National State and a State language embodied even in the Constitution. He, Benes, had hurried back from Paris and put a stop to this. Further he was an old hand at statecraft, even from the days when he studied it for his degree, but the conception of autonomy which Henlein's party urged was unknown to him and he doubted whether anyone could define it when applied to the social life of the Czechs. This led the President to speak of the Czechoslovak question. "I never subscribed to any Pittsburgh treaty," he said. "No one can operate against me with that treaty." Masaryk had certainly made a mistake there. He, Benes, had

felt it his duty to stand behind Masaryk, as usual, even in this matter.

Then the President changed the subject and spoke of his horror of war. Had he known that the independence of Czechoslovakia was only to be gained by a world war, he would rather have given it up and instead striven for political freedom for his people within the framework of the Monarchy. He had maintained this abhorrence of war. He would not believe, either, that any responsible statesman wanted war.

The bases of Czechoslovakian foreign policy in relation to Germany and Austria, could be laid down as follows:—

- (1) Czechoslovakia is today and always will be ready for every collaboration; there was no longer any hindrance to this, and public opinion in his country was in agreement with him in this.
- (2) Austria and Hungary must show sufficient will, decision and certainty of purpose to say: We want this and that, and we can and will do this and that. But they must also be prepared at any given moment to offer resistance to any pressure that might develop from outside.
- (3) The President would never undertake any action which Czechoslovakia's greatest neighbor—Germany—might interpret as being directed against her. Whatever else might happen he wished to act loyally and honorably towards Germany.

That was the reason that he had always spoken loyally and openly of the Czechoslovak attitude towards the Austrian question. Only recently he had repeated to the German Ambassador in Prague that Czechoslovakia must be against the *Anschluss* of Austria with the Reich, from political and economic reasons. It would be better for Czechoslovakia to know that an independent, free State was on her southern frontier. Certainly this was a selfish point of view, but after all Austria wanted this too and so did Europe. Germany should be satisfied with a declaration by Austria that she acknowledged herself a German State and would not allow herself to be drawn into any alliance against Germany.

Benes emphasized that he had always expressed the opinion that Austria was vital. Events had justified this in a most gratifying manner. Therefore the world had every right to remain steadfast for Austria's independence. He had always been against the 1866 conception, that is, the tendency to play Vienna against Berlin. He was convinced that such an alliance must be possible in Central Europe as exists, for example, among the Scandinavian countries, which would form a union and so keep up friendly relations with Germany. Therefore he would not give up hope that the situation in Europe would be eased.

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In these statements by the President of the Czechoslovak Republic, the Austrian Chancellor could only find confirmation of the views which he himself had discussed on so many occasions with Prime Minister Hodza. The conception of a Danube Federation, analogous to the relationship between the Scandinavian countries, and living on the best of terms with the neighboring Great Power, Germany, very happily expressed his own ideas. He was a little more skeptical than Benes regarding the possibilities of neighborly relations with a Hitler Germany, but on his side had done all he could, even down to self-effacement, not to disturb these possibilities. He was so keenly sensible of Austria's mission and her responsibility to Europe that he could not even permit discussion of them. He looked forward to the coming difficulties with anxiety, but with the clear conscience of a man who had done his duty to his country and to Europe and one who had never lost sight of the higher interests.

V

HELP FROM THE WEST?

ON THE 2ND MARCH 1938, a few days before the annexation of Austria, the well-known French authoress, Geneviève Tabouis, who specializes in foreign affairs, gave a lecture in Paris at the Théâtre des Ambassadeurs on the subject of "The Austrian Drama." After tracing developments from the Peace Treaties to the Berchtesgaden ultimatum, she went on to deal with the dangers which must threaten the balance and the peace of Europe by the establishment of German control in Vienna. She concluded her lecture by quoting the words of the "most peace-loving of all Frenchman, the man who made most concessions to Germany, one who could never be suspected of Imperialism," the words so often repeated from 1919 till his death in 1931 by Aristide Briand: "*L'Anschluss c'est la guerre.*"¹

The conception of the European balance of power expressed in these words has been for the last fifteen years a political axiom for the foreign policy of the victorious nations and particularly of the three Great Powers, France, Great Britain and Italy. It had been clearly formulated in the construction of the Peace Treaties of Versailles (Article 80) and St. Germain (Article 88) which contain a definite prohibition of an *Anschluss*; in a fresh undertaking to safeguard the independence of Austria to which Austria subscribed by signing the Geneva Protocol of the 4th October 1922 as a condition for financial aid

¹ The annexation of Austria by Germany means war.

from the League of Nation States; in the attitude of the League of Nations when turning down the Curtius-Schober Customs Union plan of 1931; and finally in 1932 on the occasion of a further grant to Austria by the League. During all this time the Western Powers carefully watched that the conditions of the Peace Treaties as regards Austria were not infringed or changed. Even in February 1933 the French Government through their Ambassador in Vienna delivered a Note in the form of an ultimatum to the effect that the so-called Hirtenberg Arms Affair¹ was contrary to the conditions of the St. Germain Peace Treaty. Hitler was then at the helm in Germany even though the actual establishment of his dictatorship was not destined to take place for a few weeks, until after the Reichstag fire and the terrorized election of the 5th March 1933.

But these few weeks were enough to bring about a complete change of atmosphere both in London and Paris. The establishment of the Third Reich caused great consternation among the Western Powers. It meant the rebirth of German Imperialism and the end of an epoch in which Germany had pressed her demands for the revision of the Treaties with diplomatic, juridical and moral arms only, and on the platform granted to her by the League of Nations. But from the very start, the changes which then took place were looked upon as historically fated. It is only necessary to read through the Press commentaries of that time to see that Hitler-Germany could already feel itself encouraged and could envisage an annexation of Austria which might even be obtained without war. The Austrian National-Socialists by increased activity let it become known that the conquest of power in the "second German State" would be attempted in a comparatively short time. In these circumstances Chancellor Dollfuss began to look for outside assistance. In the summer of 1933 he had been making confidential enquiries in Paris, Lon-

¹ This referred to the transport through Austria to Hungary of arms from former Austro-Hungarian army stores lying in Italy. These arms were to be cleaned and readjusted in the factories in Hirtenberg and Steyr. The French Note demanded that they should be returned to the sender, or, should the sender refuse to accept them, be destroyed under Franco-British supervision.

don and Rome regarding the attitude of the Powers in the event of Austria finding it necessary to make an appeal to the League of Nations should her independence be threatened. The answer came from Paris that France was prepared to give assistance and that in such a case any help would be given in accordance with the rules laid down at Geneva. Italy let it be made known that she no longer believed in the operation of League of Nations guarantees but did not refuse to go to Austria's help *via* Geneva. But the British reply was extremely disappointing. London strongly advised Dollfuss not to apply to the League of Nations, in view of the National-Socialist campaign of terror openly supported by Germany. Dollfuss must have received the impression that on the one hand he had an opponent who moved like lightning, driving forcefully forward, whilst on the other he had to deal with a system of guarantees that moved at a snail-like pace—if at all—and then only after going through a complicated procedure and surmounting many difficulties. And he knew that for assistance to be of any use at all it would have to be at hand within a few hours. This was the reason that he sought protection from a "dynamic" Power where one man could make an immediate decision and give instant aid. Therefore Dollfuss went to Rome. But in spite of the obvious interest which Mussolini showed at that time in Austria's independence, Dollfuss did not give up trying to strengthen the diplomatic guarantees of Austria's independence in other directions. The results were the declarations made by the Western Powers and Italy in February and December 1934 declaring their interest in the preservation of Austria. Under British influence, however, these declarations took on rather a platonic character and did not remove the anxiety which was growing daily in Vienna. The fact that even the murder of the Austrian Chancellor and the National-Socialist *putsch* of July 1934 did not spur the British Government to energetic action, and that France did not feel that she ought to move independently from the line where she was certain of British solidarity, is partly the reason why the successor to the murdered Chancellor, Kurt von Schuschnigg, did not make more use of the possibility of lean-

ing on the Western Powers. He would have liked to do so, for he was considerably more skeptical than his predecessor about the efficacy of the isolated Italian guarantee, about Mussolini's unchangeable attitude once he had taken up a position and about the ability of the Duce to bar Germany's path.

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The longer the Chancellor remained at the head of the Austrian Government, the less he thought that Austria's independence could be ensured by any method other than by making use of Italy's vital interest in the existence of a buffer State on the one hand, and, on the other, by Austrian policy demanding from the Third Reich a direct recognition of sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Treaty of Friendship, therefore, under Italian guarantee was the perfect and, to his mind, sole solution to the problem. Only in the last critical months did his thoughts circle round the idea of a Danube Federation. In any case it was only the self-defense of the Danube States which he had in mind. He never attempted, through the Little Entente or Czechoslovakia, to establish closer relations with the Western Powers. He had always classed as Utopian the opinion of numerous Austrian patriots that it was Austria's duty, in view of the establishment of the Third Reich, to emphasize the Austrian idea—even when it was in opposition to the conception of an "all German" culture—in domestic politics, to give the call for the rallying of all anti-National-Socialist forces, and in foreign politics, to stick resolutely to the European front represented by the Western Powers.

Here again ideological questions played a rôle. The Chancellor's German sentiments drove him to seek co-operation with the Third Reich even though National-Socialism ruled in Berlin, that is to say a system which must have been separated from the Christian-Social Catholic Schuschnigg by a chasm. But when it came to the Western Powers, he made use of the differences in internal political development as something affecting also foreign policy. So long as Italy was with him and when he was dealing with conservative Britain and the France of Laval and Flandin, he thought co-operation possible. But after the May

election of 1936 and the formation of a People's Front Government in France, he felt a deep resentment which he could never get over. The distorted picture of France which German propaganda went to so much trouble to spread in Central Europe, became a fact for the Head of the Austrian Government. Unfortunately there were people around him who did their best to strengthen this opinion. For example the French reports of the semi-official *Reichspost*, which were mainly in the hands of a notorious agent of the Polish Foreign Minister, helped considerably to influence ruling circles in Austria with the legend of France's complete decadence, her downfall as a Great Power and her rapid strides towards revolution through Communism. The opposing opinions of the Vienna Burgomaster Schmitz, certainly a conservative-minded man, were brushed aside as the ravings of a Francophile. Even in the most select circles of the Austrian Government, amongst those who were undoubtedly supporters of the European orientation, as, for instance, the leaders of the Christian Workers' movement, great and, it is true, pleasant surprise could be created by describing conditions in France as they really were.

But the Chancellor's skepticism could not be broken down. There was certainly no effort spared by those who rightly estimated the position and to whom in other questions he listened with the greatest confidence. The Chancellor stuck obstinately to his point of view. "Léon Blum is neither a possible nor a desirable guarantor of Austrian independence," he said in the summer of 1936 to one who had been warning him and whose competence in all questions relating to France was well known and valued by the Chancellor, except on this one point. And when after the conclusion of the Treaty of July, the French Catholics, whose warm friendship for Austria was indisputable, wrote in a critical vein, he replied to Paris with great bitterness that the French Catholics had forfeited the right to criticize since they had not been able to achieve anything in their own country.

With the collapse of the Stresa Front, the Western Powers had fallen back on the second plan for Austrian foreign policy. In Vienna there was an intense desire for the reinstatement of this Front, under whose protection a certain amount of security had been felt throughout the year 1935. But Schuschnigg and his colleagues did not feel that the Powers, with the exception of Italy, could be looked upon as willing or capable of preventing Germany from annexing Austria, should they be called upon to do so. Theoretically the key position held by Great Britain was appreciated in Vienna, but nothing was done to awaken her interest in Austria. Since the conclusion of the July Treaty the Embassies in London and Paris were left to work entirely on their own to interest the British and French statesmen in the Austrian question. Not until it was too late did the Chancellor begin to put forward ideas of the best means of explaining to the British public, which was being strongly bombarded by German propaganda, the European significance of Austria. At the beginning of 1937 the dangers became so apparent that the Quai d'Orsay, on the initiative of certain French parliamentarians, decided to take up an active stand, and a renewed Anglo-French announcement of protection for Austria appeared possible. But Guido Schmidt, who represented Austria at the Coronation ceremonies in London, where he came into contact with the directors of British and French foreign policy, strongly advised them against such action. Both in London and in Paris he declared to anyone who would listen to him that Austria was in no way threatened and that her independence was fully secured by the Rome Protocols and the Treaty with Germany. His only worry at that time was in case Berlin and Rome might place a false construction on his visit to the Western Powers. For that reason he was careful that it should not have any diplomatic significance. Instead of increasing the Powers' interest in Austria, he tried, on the contrary, to dampen the awakening enthusiasm. Thus was an opportunity thrown away, never to return. The Austrian Chancellor himself had gone to a certain amount of trouble to avoid meeting the leaders of French and British foreign policy since the split between Italy and the

Western Powers, and especially after the conclusion of the July Treaty. For the same reasons Austria no longer had any active policy in the League of Nations during the last few years of her existence. The Chancellor pointedly stayed away from the League meetings of 1936 and 1937. He refused the opportunity of meeting Léon Blum in September 1936 at Geneva. Apart from the negative episodes of Guido Schmidt's travels, contact with the Western Powers was limited to the official business between the Embassies of either side. London and Paris were never quite sure whether the despatches of the Austrian Ambassadors in these capitals ever reached the Chancellor or got any further than Guido Schmidt. The occasional visits to Vienna by leading French and British politicians, who always went home with the best impression of their conversations with the Chancellor and of the uprightness of the patriotic Austrians, and who did much to keep up the interest in the Austrian question, were, on the whole, a poor substitute for Austria's own efforts. Nor was it sufficient that Burgomaster Schmitz often visited Paris, that Ernst Karl Winter journeyed abroad a lot, that representatives of the Trade Union League appeared in the Western capitals and that personal activity was displayed by the Austrian Embassy in Paris and by Austrian journalists and other unofficial people; the more so because German counter-action was very plainly to be seen at that time.

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After the failure of the static and anti-revisionist policy based on the Peace Treaties, and especially after the collapse of the Stresa Front, the Austrian question became, for the Western Powers, a function of their relations with Italy and Germany from time to time. Great Britain in particular had seen in Austria for some time merely a means of throwing a bone of contention between Rome and Berlin and obstructing their Axis policy. Anxieties for the British Empire and the position in the Mediterranean, Africa and the Far East had caused the ruling British politicians to look on Central Europe merely as a cockpit of secondary importance. The repeated declarations by leading British statesmen, which seemed to limit their intervention on

the Continent to the case of a direct attack on France or Belgium, and which displayed only lesser interest in Central Europe, greatly encouraged the aggressive policy of the Third Reich in the Danube Basin. So far as the French Government was concerned, it seemed to think that after the 7th March and the lack of Franco-British co-operation in the international politics of 1933 to 1936, every conceivable concession must be made to secure the revival of Franco-British solidarity. For some time it had become second nature to the Quai d'Orsay, before taking any action to make sure first of British collaboration by taking the opinion of the British Foreign Office. London was not too happy about this. But Paris could not grasp that France must lead in the Central European question, whatever Franco-British co-operation might demand. French politicians such as Paul Reynaud, who energetically stressed this point of view, had to fight a tendency (arising from the apparent lack of interest shown by Great Britain in the Danube Basin) for France also to wash her hands of the whole affair, with the excuse that it was impossible for France to become the "Policeman of Europe."

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Throughout the year 1937, German foreign policy made the most of this attitude both in London and Paris, and tried to obtain a declaration of non-intervention by the Western Powers in Central European questions. The Third Reich energetically turned to its own account what was described as Austria's treason to the interests of "all Germany," namely, any, even the smallest, attempt to sound the pulse of the Western Powers, especially "People's Front France." These led to excited protests from the Reich Press. The Paris World Exhibition of 1937 gave leaders of the National-Socialist regime an opportunity of coming into contact with French politicians of every party and also with the French Government. It was not in vain that Berlin, at great cost to the propaganda fund, put new life into the Franco-German Society, which so long as men of the Weimar parties were at its head had been regarded by the National-Socialists as a semi-traitorous body. Nor was it in vain that great efforts were made to influence French foreign policy by the co-operation

of War Veteran Societies and Youth Organizations. Even economic circles were harnessed for this aim. The director of the Reichsbank, Dr. Schacht, was the first of a string of official visitors during 1937. He had a talk with M. Léon Blum and M. Delbos, and made statements that must have raised hopes in French Government circles which were certainly not over ready to be trusting. The not unsuccessful game played with Austria—the emergence of an allegedly “moderate” as opposed to a “radical” leading group in the Third Reich—was cleverly turned to advantage in Paris also. As the French politicians and economic experts must rightly have said to themselves, the war economy established by the Third Reich in peace-time, and the policy of the wildest competition in armaments, could not be looked upon as a permanent solution of the political and economic problems of the Reich. They must either lead to war or to a new European orientation of Germany, that is to say, to readjustment of political and economic relations. Declarations in this sense by influential Germans impressed the French. After Schacht, who in his capacity as acting Finance Minister of the Reich, opened the German Pavilion at the Exhibition, there came in June 1937 the Chief of the German General Staff, General Beck, who created the best impressions on his French colleagues and the War Minister, M. Daladier, on account of his skillful, outspoken and broadminded statements. Schacht’s future successor in the Finance Ministry, Dr. Funk, who was then Secretary of State in the Propaganda Ministry, also made a much-discussed visit to France, and finally amid great secrecy and apparently unofficially there arrived in the French capital Herr von Papen himself. All these visits pointed to one thing, namely that a combined effort was being made by the diplomatic corps, the military and the economic branches to get Hitler-Germany cordially understood. An official visit by the Reich Foreign Minister, Freiherr von Neurath, was to have rounded off this series of “feelers,” but he was unable to go on account of a new cloud in the Spanish war sky. The Chief of the Press in the Foreign Ministry, Ministerial Director Aschmann, took his place and left behind him with his colleague at

the Quai d'Orsay, Pierre Comert, an invitation to Berlin to discuss a "Press peace."

After the non-National-Socialists, who were to represent a Germany ready for peace and on the borders of a policy of revision, came the representatives of the Party itself. The National-Socialist "Leader" of the German War Veterans Organizations, Herr Oberlindober, was often seen in Paris, as was the Reich Sports leader, von Tschammer-Osten. But there also came the Secretary of State from the Reich Chancellery, Herr Lamers, a man who had quickly gained Hitler's trust, and the Reich "Leader of Youth," Baldur von Schirach, prominent in the innermost ruling group of the Third Reich. The visits followed each other at continually shortening intervals, and no one could fail to notice that a true German peace offensive was going on. Even Goering's right-hand man, Flight-General and Secretary of State Milch, found his way to Paris and to the office of Pierre Cot, Minister of the People's Front and the champion of Franco-Soviet Russian co-operation, one of the men most hated by the Third Reich. Not a single one of the German visitors failed to mention that the Third Reich's intentions towards France and also the attitude of the German Press, were very different from the attitude taken up by Italy. And this touched the magic spot. Naturally Berlin knew exactly that the disappointment in relation to Italy, her former ally and a "sister Latin nation," had put France in a frame of mind which was almost friendly to Germany. The German Ambassador in Paris, Graf Welczek, in a conversation about this time with various diplomats, said with a certain amount of bitterness, that Italy had relegated the Third Reich to the unenviable position of "public enemy No. 1." Strong as was the desire in Right circles in France to have a reconciliation with Italy, there was a serious tendency amongst responsible people and also deep in the Socialist Party, to seize the opportunity of coming to an understanding with Germany and to pay Mussolini back in his own coin by leaving him sitting in isolation. No Frenchman thought that Austria could be the price of such a policy. But the lessening of Franco-German tension which took effect in

1937 could at least shake the decision of the French Government to make the maintenance of Austria's independence a *conditio sine qua non* of European peace.

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At the same time a policy leading to an understanding with Germany was openly encouraged in England. Already during the Abyssinian war, London had weighed the chances of forcing Mussolini to his knees by a three-cornered London-Paris-Berlin pact. It was in connection with this policy that the *démarche* by Sir Austen Chamberlain to Vienna followed on the Austro-German pact. At the end of July 1936, the Permanent Under Secretary of State, Sir Robert Vansittart, was invited to "private" conversations in Berlin, and in September of that same year Mr. Lloyd George had a three-hour interview with Hitler in the presence of Herr von Ribbentrop. Meanwhile, after the raising of sanctions, and already then under the influence of the future Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, the policy of reconciliation with Italy was introduced. It had its complement in the British policy towards Spain. The Conservative Government let it be known that it was believed possible to enter into relations with a victorious Franco which would exclude any danger from that side to the British (and consequently the French) Mediterranean situation. The Opposition parties were actively against this policy of reconciliation with Mussolini and his "Spanish branch," and were therefore inclined to encourage the attempt at coming to a private arrangement with Germany. So far as Austria was concerned, a portion of the Labor and Liberal parties were against the Catholic-Conservative Government in Vienna, and sympathy towards the Austrian Social-Democratic Opposition, which was basically German in outlook, undoubtedly played a rôle.

Nevertheless the attempt at a rapprochement between London and Berlin had no concrete success—thanks greatly to the incompetence of Ribbentrop, who, after the death of the experienced diplomat von Hoesch, was entrusted by Hitler with the British Ambassadorship. On the other hand, the Anglo-Italian reconciliation resulted, after many diplomatic ups and downs,

in the "Gentlemen's Agreement" of January 1937. Vienna breathed again, and Mussolini's interest in Austria, in view of this agreement, seemed to have automatically re-awakened. (At that time Chancellor Schuschnigg thought seriously of carrying through a Restoration and when the Reich Foreign Minister, Baron von Neurath, visited Vienna, the Chancellor took up a very firm attitude towards him.) Yet once again the Anglo-Italian agreement came to nothing. In the summer of 1937, therefore, London, feeling safe in having two irons in the fire, recommended putting out feelers towards Germany, and finally induced the French Government to repeat their efforts of 1935 and 1936, that is to say, to find out from Germany under what conditions and at what price she would join in a firm policy of European agreement and trusting co-operation with the Western Powers.

Italy was at the same time carrying out a counterstroke to the British plan, hesitatingly supported by France, of continually testing the possibilities of an Axis policy, and also to the German action of neutralizing the Western Powers on Central and Eastern European questions. Equal perseverance was shown in both London and Berlin, on one side with the completion of the Axis in view—wherein to commence with, the Danube Basin was ignored by tacit understanding—and on the other side with the jealous eye of Italian diplomacy watching relations between the Third Reich and the Western Powers. Mussolini also thought it of importance to let the world know that he, too, had a couple of irons in the fire. Almost simultaneously with his visit to Berlin and the demonstrative emphasis laid on the friendship of the two Fascist Powers, the entry of Italy was made known into the Nyon agreement against piracy in the Mediterranean, a policy originally introduced by the Western Powers as an anti-Italian action. This temporarily caused great uneasiness in Berlin, which launched an offensive on London (through those members of the House of Lords who were friendly to Germany), leading to the visit of Lord Halifax, the Foreign Minister, to Berlin and to Hitler in Berchtesgaden.

Immediately after these diplomatic feelers, the rumor went round the European capitals that Hitler had announced his intention to solve the Austrian and Czechoslovak questions at an early date and had demanded Britain's neutrality, in return for which he had offered a political armistice in the Colonial question and a renewed protestation of his desire for peace with France. The rumors seemed to be confirmed by the news of a visit to Berlin by the former French Prime Minister, M. Flandin, a few weeks after that by Lord Halifax. True, Flandin had not seen Hitler himself but his first assistant, and had received the impression after his conversation, that it was certain that peace was only to be attained by "France's withdrawal behind the Maginot Line" and the cessation of her active Central European policy. On the basis of the attitude of the City of London, England, he was certain, had already "written off" Austria and Czechoslovakia.

All these rumors and communications raised anxiety in Vienna to the highest pitch, just at the moment when the final negative reply had to be formulated to the demands made by Goering to Guido Schmidt on the 7th November when the latter visited him "on the occasion of the Hunting Exhibition." Even Austria's friends in the world were alarmed and with them all those who realized that the European balance would be ruined and shattered by the establishment of a German hegemony in the Danube Basin.

On the 24th November, a very heated debate on Central Europe took place at a meeting of the Foreign Commission of the French Chamber. The members of the Commission demanded information on the results of Lord Halifax's visit to Germany, on the attitude proposed to be taken by the French Government towards the forthcoming meeting of French and British Ministers in London, and on the purpose of the journeys to the friendly and allied Governments in Central and Eastern Europe for which the Foreign Minister, M. Delbos, had been preparing for some time and which were now fixed for December. Delbos stated that Lord Halifax had gone to Germany purely to gather information. The information received so far

by the Quai d'Orsay from various directions did not confirm the various Press conjectures about the visit. The Deputies received the impression, however, that the Foreign Minister had not been fully informed of the outcome of the conversations between Lord Halifax and Hitler and his colleagues. Speakers of all parties, from the Conservative Deputy, M. Grat, through the Catholic-Democrat, M. Pezet, to the Communist, M. Bonté, asked the Minister to make a statement on the subject of Austria's independence. The attitude of all the members of the Commission made it clear that they demanded that a very firm line be taken by the French Government on this question. Monsieur Pezet asked the Foreign Minister whether the Governments of France and England, which in 1931 had obstructed the Austro-German Customs Union desired by both countries, would not be going contrary to their obligations undertaken in the Geneva protocol if they were to permit a change in existing conditions. Delbos answered in the affirmative. Pezet then asked with raised voice: "Are you, Sir, of our opinion, that today more than ever it is the unquestionable duty of France and England to uphold the independence of Austria?" The Foreign Minister replied, in complete agreement with the Commission: "That is absolutely my opinion." And still in animated tones he had added that he would like to draw the Commission's attention to the admirable courage, the endurance and the honesty of the Austrian Government under such difficult and adverse circumstances. Pezet expressed the opinion that, in view of certain statements in the British Press, if a plebiscite in Austria were urged from the German side, France and England would be neglecting their duties under the Geneva protocol were they to agree to such a plebiscite. Again the Foreign Minister said that he agreed with this view.

Deputy Grat spoke against the French approval of a policy of renunciation. He drew the Minister's attention to an article by Pierre Dominique in the *République* in which the view was vigorously expressed that France should leave Germany a free hand in Austria and Czechoslovakia. Such an article might easily be misread in Germany as well as Austria as a sign of

public opinion in France, especially as rightly or wrongly the *République* was looked upon abroad as the official organ of the Radical Party, the most prominent party in France, to which both the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister belonged. Delbos replied that this article only expressed the personal opinion of the contributor and, moreover, the *République* could not in any way be regarded as the organ of the Radical Party. He, too, regretted the appearance of such an article and would bring his influence to bear on the editors of the paper. In the name of his party, Deputy Grat then emphasized the extreme importance of the maintenance of Austria's independence from the standpoint of French interests and for the maintenance of European peace. Delbos replied that the French Government recognized the maintenance of Austria's independence as of vital interest to France and to Europe. If France had not taken such precise and formal obligations on Austria's behalf as they had on Czechoslovakia's, this was obviously because the fate of Czechoslovakia could not be separated from that of Austria. The French Government, so long as there were actual proposals or incitements against Austria, would offer Austria every possible practical aid. He would make this perfectly clear in the forthcoming conversations with the British Ministers and put it forward as the unanimous opinion of all parties of the French Chamber, expressed at a meeting of that Commission.

The Communist Deputy, M. Florimond Bonté, who spoke on the same lines as Grat and Pezet, specially drew attention to the unanimous will of the Austrian working classes to see the freedom and independence of Austria preserved. All the Deputies brought away from this sitting the impression that Delbos had never before expressed himself with such determination on the Austrian question. He had been noticeably impressed by the unanimity of the representatives of the various parties.

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The Franco-British ministerial meeting took place on the 29th and 30th November 1937, and the experts of both nations were present. On the 2nd December the British Foreign Office gave Baron (now Sir George) Franckenstein, the Austrian Amba-

sador, a certain amount of information on the outcome of the conversations. The French and British statesmen had come to the conclusion that only an all-embracing solution of the outstanding questions with Germany should be attempted. Thus, for instance, although the colonial question was so bound up with the peace of Europe, an isolated handling of this question was not possible. On this subject the British and French Governments were in agreement that by diplomatic channels every other country which was administering former German protectorates under mandate by the League of Nations should be consulted. That meant South Africa, Belgium, Australia and New Zealand. Preliminary negotiations would take a long time, so a concrete proposal by the Powers to Germany could not be expected in the near future. Incidentally, in his talk with Lord Halifax, Hitler had not insisted on a hundred-per-cent return of the former German colonies but a replacement of equal value, say by being given a new German colony in Africa. This should consist of territory which still belonged to Belgian Congo or Portuguese Angola. During the conversations the relations with Italy were touched upon. The French Prime Minister, M. Chautemps, had stated that a clearing of the Franco-Italian atmosphere would be heartily welcomed.

On the 3rd December, the Quai d'Orsay also received information on the London conversations. The British Government had not allowed itself to be influenced on the Central European questions by articles which had appeared in *The Times* and the *Observer*, both of which were in favor of Great Britain taking no interest in Central Europe. These articles were in all probability influenced by a memorandum on the aims of German foreign policy, sent privately by Goering to various British politicians friendly towards Germany. Great Britain certainly was not prepared to enter into any new alliances, but the British Ministers had spontaneously declared to their French colleagues that the British Government was taking just as much interest in Central Europe as hitherto and had no intention of giving up this interest for any other advantage whatsoever. The French Minister had then asked in which way England would con-

tribute towards the security of Austria's independence. The reply was the interesting proposal that in view of the desire to have all matters regularized with Germany, the Reich Government should be asked to extend to the Western Powers all those obligations which they had undertaken to Austria in the agreement of the 11th July 1936. In other words an internationalization of the July Treaty should be attempted. This proposal was thought to be well worth consideration by the French Ministers. The British Government had also shown great comprehension of the Czechoslovak situation. They were of the opinion that concessions must be made to the Sudeten Germans. But, like France, they considered that those concessions should not go beyond a well-defined limit. Germany would have to enter into strict undertakings as regards Czechoslovakia. They were united as regards the colonial question in not proposing under any circumstances to recognize the principle that Germany had any rights or title to colonies. Germany could only have a share of the Powers' colonies, in concrete and practical form and within the framework of a general adjustment. In return Germany would have to give undertakings to maintain the *status quo* in Europe. The British representatives stated further that Italy was strongly pressing for a reopening of negotiations with Great Britain, which presumably was in consequence of Lord Halifax's visit to Germany. But the British Cabinet was temporarily waiting as they were not inclined to enter into an agreement to limit armaments in the Mediterranean, on which Italy naturally placed great store. But the British Government wished to find out what the opinion in Paris would be were a reopening of negotiations between London and Rome to take place. Monsieur Chautemps had replied that France would not have the least objection to such negotiations so long as England insisted beforehand that the Press campaign against the Western Powers be stopped. The French Ministers were particularly struck by the complete unanimity between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Eden. Mr. Eden had, in fact, done most of the talking, and Mr. Chamberlain had limited himself to voicing his agreement.

A more detailed conversation with a member of the French

Government gave further information. The Minister said that England and France would not let Germany have her concessions bit by bit but would arrange them all as one adjustment. But he was a little skeptical about the outcome of such dealings with the Reich Government. Lord Halifax's visit to Germany had come about principally from motives of domestic policy. It must have been a bit of a blow to those pro-German peers to have the wind taken out of the sails of their offensive like that. So France had every reason to be pleased with the result of Lord Halifax's mission. The French Minister spoke of the Italian Press campaign against France also, but obviously did not take it seriously. His actual words were: "*Nous nous en foutons.*" At about the same time, M. François-Poncet, the French Ambassador in Berlin, told the Austrian Ambassador, Herr Tauschitz, that there could be no talk of any negotiations between France and Germany at the moment, as he could not trace any desire on Germany's part for this.

From other sources there were comparatively pessimistic views on the probable attitude of the Western Powers in the event of a German attack on Austria. The King of Bulgaria, coming from London on a visit to Paris on the 13th November, had a long talk with a friend whom he had known for many years. This friend gave the following information regarding the Austrian question: The King had gained the impression in London that the leaders of the Government were thoroughly opposed to intervention on Czechoslovakia's behalf should she be attacked by Germany, even if France were to fulfill her obligations under the alliance. So far as Austria was concerned the feelings of the Prime Minister were considerably more friendly than towards Czechoslovakia, but armed intervention by Great Britain in Austria was not to be reckoned on.

At the end of December the Austrian Ambassador was received in audience by King George VI. During the conversation His Majesty asked the Austrian diplomat whether it were not possible to arrange some sort of plebiscite in Austria so as to take the wind out of the sails of German propaganda. This conversation therefore showed that the German effort to sway

opinion in favor of such a plebiscite had had a certain effect not only in a part of the British Press and among politicians with little influence, but even in responsible circles of the country.

News came from Paris at this time that everyone in France did not share the unconditional readiness of the French Government to fulfill her alliance obligations to Czechoslovakia even if operations began with a rising of the Sudeten Germans and German intervention followed later. When on the 18th October an incident occurred at Teplitz-Schoenau and some Sudeten German demonstrators, amongst them several members of Henlein's party, came into violent conflict with the Czechoslovak police, Monsieur Delbos told a Czechoslovak diplomat that France had not changed in her loyalty to the alliance. But the Extreme Right Party of France were not the only ones to think differently. The members of the French General Staff and even the politicians who were in close touch with the Radical Party were opposed to intervention on Czechoslovakia's behalf. It was understood that Monsieur Chautemps had said as much to Monsieur Herriot, who was a staunch believer in intervention. The military point of view was that the reoccupation of the Rhineland and rearmament by Germany had made intervention very difficult. The only possibility was an air attack on the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial centers which would naturally call forth counteraction by Germany. England would probably not come in with armed forces on the side of France for Czechoslovakia unless German troops had crossed the French frontier. But Germany would hesitate to do that even in the event of a declaration of war, from military reasons (the Maginot Line) as well as political (Great Britain).

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By the middle of December, Vienna knew exactly what Hitler had said to Lord Halifax regarding Austria. He had said that he had no aggressive intentions towards Austria. He protested against the suggestion that he wished to attack and conquer that country. All he demanded from the Austrian Government was strict and complete compliance with the agreement of the 11th July 1936. This question would be settled very much more

quickly if France and England would not keep on meddling in Austro-German affairs and so spur on Vienna to resistance. Further, the Western Powers should not forget that Germany had particularly strong interests, both economic and national, in Austria and the Sudeten districts, and that these must be regarded as zones of German interest, as in other parts of the world there were zones of British and French interest. Peace could only be secured in Central Europe if these natural and lawful interests of Germany were taken into account and if London and Paris would impress on Vienna and Prague to deal with Germany direct and not drag in foreign Powers. It surely was obvious to England that in view of a common race, language and culture, Germany could not be disinterested in the fate of her fellow-countrymen beyond the border. In President Wilson's fourteen points this was called a nation's right of self-determination when it was to Germany's detriment, so surely Germany could not be denied the right of using this principle. One of these days, added Hitler, it might be worth while to institute a plebiscite in Austria in order to give the German population in that country their right of self-determination and of expressing their will. But apparently he did not stress this point in his conversation with Lord Halifax.

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Monsieur Delbos set out on his journey on the 2nd December. In spite of a great parade of official optimism, the expectations of a successful result were not very high even in the French Foreign Office. When asked by a friend what Delbos was going to Belgrade for, the Yugoslav Ambassador in Paris replied, "I'd like to know the answer myself." The Polish Ambassador declared that Poland would fulfill her alliance obligations in case of an unprovoked attack by Germany on France and had, in fact, expressed her readiness to do so after the occupation of the Rhineland on the 7th March 1936. But in the case of a German attack on Czechoslovakia and a subsequent declaration of war on the Reich by France, the view of the Polish Government was that the provisions of the alliance would not have been fulfilled. In this respect the wording of the Franco-Polish agreement was

very plain. Military co-operation between Poland and Russia was out of the question. Incidentally this was also the view of the King of Rumania and the Yugoslav Government. Monsieur Delbos would certainly try when in Warsaw to win over the Polish Government to a better understanding with Czechoslovakia, but no change in the situation was to be expected. It was far more likely that the Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, in view of the possibility of a German attack on Czechoslovakia, would endeavor to form a "neutrality front" trying to include Rumania, Jugoslavia, Hungary and also Austria.

In the conversation already mentioned, the King of Bulgaria had also said that he had told President Lebrun that France could give up any idea of the possibility of a Russian march through either Rumania or Poland under any conditions whatsoever.

When Monsieur Delbos arrived on the last stage of his journey at Prague, the French Ambassador in Vienna, Monsieur Puaux, came there in all secrecy, bringing an invitation to his Foreign Minister from the Austrian Chancellor, Schuschnigg. He was invited when making his proposed journey to Athens and Angora in March 1938, to break his journey at Vienna and pay an official visit to the Austrian Government. Very evasively Monsieur Delbos replied that he did not know yet whether the journey to Greece and Turkey would ever take place, but if it did he would remember Austria's invitation gladly and would ask Vienna if his visit was still desired. There was no longer any trace of the very positive attitude taken by the Foreign Minister only a few weeks previously before the Foreign Commission in the Chamber, and of which he made such a parade. What had happened in the meantime? The explanation was soon forthcoming.

* * *

Monsieur Delbos was back in Paris on the 19th December. On the 21st he received representatives of the diplomatic Press, to whom he expressed himself as very satisfied with his journey. His welcome by the Reich Foreign Minister, Baron von Neu-

rath, when passing through Berlin, was so demonstrative that he now had hopes of the possibility of renewing Franco-German negotiations. In all the capitals he had visited, he had found great interest and sympathy for the plan of closer co-operation between the Danube States. In Berlin there was no distrust shown towards such a project. In Austria and in Hungary, where he had had an hour's conversation in Budapest station with the political director of the Foreign Office, he had found completely open minds on the subject. The greatest surprise of his travels was that he had been able to learn of Italy's far-reaching sympathy for the plan of collaboration in the Danube Basin.

Confidential circles, however, thought otherwise. Prominent officials at the Quai d'Orsay frankly declared that the Foreign Minister's statements regarding the complete success of his mission and the favorable outlook for the conclusion of a Danube pact, were based more on his need for prestige at home than on actual facts. In Warsaw, Delbos had certainly had a good reception by the President Mosicki and Marshal Rydz-Smigly, but Colonel Beck, who after all had to be reckoned with, was obviously insincere. All Polish politicians and diplomats had refused an offer of French mediation between Warsaw and Prague. In Bucharest the old sympathy with France was still held by the King and the Army. But the chances of a rapprochement between Rumania and Hungary were very small. Very little faith could be placed in the Yugoslav Prime Minister, Stoyadinowitsch, but on the other hand great satisfaction was to be derived from the sentiments of the people, who gave proof of their feelings towards France at the Belgrade demonstration. The Czechoslovak Government was prepared to grant concessions to the Sudeten Germans, but not to such an extent as might threaten the sovereignty and independence of Czechoslovakia and the unity of the State.

Soon further information filtered through. Traveling back from Prague to Paris, Monsieur Delbos, sitting in the dining-car with a close colleague, had tried to draw up a balance-sheet of his journey. The purpose—with the approval of the British

Cabinet—had been to alleviate the tension and to prepare a way for general European adjustment, but if Germany's refusal to co-operate in such a solution threatened to wreck it, then a strong defense front must be available. Italy had obviously been sidetracked, and appeared much more as Germany's rival in the Danube Basin than one would think in view of the Axis. "So, as far as it goes," said Monsieur Delbos, "we can be quite satisfied. Certainly Great Britain's responsibilities in the Far East may leave us *tête-à-tête* with Italy in the Mediterranean one day and cause us increased pressure. But we don't allow ourselves to be bluffed. There is only one thing which looks black: Austria. Benes, it is true, is very optimistic in this respect; he looks upon the German-Italian rivalry as a guarantee of Austria's continuance. But I cannot get away from the impression that the reverse is the case." The Minister paused for a moment during which he pensively knocked the ash from his cigarette. "*Croyez moi,*" he then added, "*l'Autriche est bien perdue,*" and, with an anxious expression and a slight sigh: "*Que pouvons nous faire?*"

This striking pessimism of the French Foreign Minister was soon to be explained. A few days after his return, Monsieur Delbos spoke at a secret sitting of the Foreign Commission of the Chamber. To the amazement of the Deputies, who had found him so positive on the Austrian question at the end of November, he now declared, bluntly, and without any signs of special excitement, that Colonel Beck had told him in Warsaw that he had not the slightest belief in Austria's continuance. He was certain that the *Anschluss* would take place very shortly, probably in the spring of 1938. Shortly before saying this he had pointed out that Mr. Neville Chamberlain had told Monsieur Chautemps in London that during Hitler's conversation with Lord Halifax he had said that all he asked from Austria was a loyal and complete adherence to the Treaty of the 11th July. This could best be carried out free from any interference by foreign powers. There was no mention in the *exposé* of the much more far-reaching allusions by Hitler to the possibility of a plebiscite and to the "oppressed condition of his German fellow-

countrymen on the far side of the frontier," which a Power of Germany's standing could not tolerate for long. The Deputies must have found the contrast all the greater between Colonel Beck's statement and the report of the Halifax-Hitler conversation. They asked Delbos straight out how he was able to reconcile the reassuring protest by Hitler with Beck's view, which was obviously inspired by Berlin and which must have been a German *ballon d'essai* to find out how the French Foreign Minister reacted. Monsieur Delbos did not reply to this question. He had also been silent in Warsaw and had taken Colonel Beck's remarks with no show of feeling. Berlin must immediately have been told of this. Continuing, Monsieur Delbos said that Colonel Beck thought that not only Vienna, but Prague also was lost and on that account refused to consider a Polish-Czechoslovak rapprochement.

With this exception the Foreign Minister had only optimistic impressions to give the Deputies. The President of the Polish Republic had spontaneously declared that in case of war Poland, if only on account of her geographical position, would be forced to take sides with France. In Bucharest, King Carol, whose sympathy with a Danube pact seemed, incidentally, to be quite platonic, had told him of a difference between Goering and Goebbels on the Danube and Balkan questions. The Italian Ambassador in Bucharest had said that Italy was seriously disturbed by Hitler's advance towards the South-East. On that account she would support any Franco-British action in the Danube Basin, although outwardly Germany would have to be taken into consideration. The Yugoslav Prime Minister, Stoyadinowitsch, had stated that even though his Government truly wished to act differently, it could not over-ride the people's wishes which, in the case of war, would demand unquestionably to be on the side of France and England. In conclusion, Monsieur Delbos said that the British Government had asked him whilst on his travels, which were also carried out at British request, to work for a Danube pact towards which Great Britain would use her influence and from which London had great expectations of general appeasement. Mr. Eden's view was that Czechoslovakia and

Turkey were the only countries which could be regarded as trustworthy friends. The French Foreign Minister had found complete agreement with the Franco-Russian pact in London, Warsaw, Bucharest, Belgrade and Prague, but he had also found annoyance at the activities of the Comintern.

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So far as Austria was concerned, the French Foreign Minister's journeys had an entirely negative result. In any case, Colonel Beck's remark seems to have thoroughly depressed Monsieur Delbos. At the end of December, the Austrian Ambassador in Warsaw told Vienna that the Turkish Ambassador in the Polish capital had heard from absolutely reliable sources that Delbos, when speaking to the Soviet Russian representative, had used words to the general effect that: "An attack by Germany on Czechoslovakia is for us a *casus fœderis* and would result in France marching at once. The Austrian situation is quite another matter—we have no alliance there." The Soviet Russian representative is said to have reported this to Moscow at once.

Meanwhile further details came to hand regarding Poland's attitude in the event of a conflict in Central Europe. A prominent member of the Austrian Government had a talk, before Monsieur Delbos' travels, with the Polish Ambassador in Budapest. On being asked by the Austrian how Poland would act in the case of a German attack on Czechoslovakia and a subsequent declaration of war on the Reich by France, the Polish diplomat replied that Poland would then have no obligations to France under the Treaty. But the Germans could not by any means reckon on support from Poland because any German extension in Central Europe would affect Polish interests. Were Hungary attacked by Germany, then the special sympathy which Warsaw feels for Hungary would enter into the question. There were no territorial agreements between Germany and Poland.

Both the Hungarian Prime Minister, Daranyi, and his Foreign Minister, Kanya, returned to Budapest, after their visit to Berlin on the 24th and 25th November, in a very worried frame of mind. They felt repelled by the tone ruling in Berlin. Daranyi, who is a very religious Protestant, suffered from a feeling

of dejection owing to the manner in which the Church was being persecuted in the Third Reich. Daranyi attempted to intervene with Hitler to allow the German Catholics to take part in the Budapest Eucharist Congress. This evoked a furious outburst from the Führer who almost screamed: "I will not; I never take anything back." But then he pulled himself together, and, as a member of the Hungarian delegation put it, "became as sweet as sugar." At a dinner given for his Hungarian guests, Hitler launched out into strong expressions against England and Czechoslovakia. The annexation of Austria was unavoidable. On being asked by one of his guests what would then happen to Hungary, Hitler replied: "We shall get on all right with Hungary. We have common interests."

There were clashes with Hitler's entourage also. Goebbels behaved in such a high-handed manner that Daranyi had to correct him: "You seem to forget, Herr Reichsminister, that you are not dealing with a German Governor of Wurtemberg or Baden but with the Hungarian Prime Minister." In Goering's office they saw a map on which Austria was shown as belonging to Germany. Daranyi, pointing to this map, asked: "What has Guido Schmidt got to say to that?" Goering replied with a smile: "That will be our future hunting ground," and immediately added: "Are you also working with Austria and Czechoslovakia against us?"

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The French Foreign Minister's pessimism, which was shared by the men round Flandin and some adherents of the Radical Party but not by the diplomats of the Quai d'Orsay, was actively contested by influential politicians in France. In their view the common fate of Austria and Czechoslovakia rendered a separate treatment of the two countries, in the event of an attack by Germany, quite impossible. In January 1938, the Chairman of the Foreign Commission in the Chamber, the Radical Deputy, M. Mistler, made a journey to Austria and Czechoslovakia. While in Vienna he visited, amongst other places, the central office of the Trade Unions (*Gewerkschaftsbund*) where he was received by the president, Herr Staud. During the conversation

it was plainly stated that the Austrian working classes were all in favor of the independence of their Fatherland. When Monsieur Mistler returned to Paris on the 2nd February he made a report on his journey to the Foreign Commission. He expressed himself as very optimistic regarding the possibilities of Austrian self-preservation. The skillful as well as courageous policy of the Austrian Government was deserving of the greatest recognition and sympathy. Austria's internal situation was relatively favorable. The signs of a consolidation of political and economic relations were unmistakable. The strength of the illegal National-Socialists should not be over-estimated. It was his opinion that barely 10 per cent of the population were truly confirmed National-Socialists. If there were added the "hangers on" and the opportunists and also the dissatisfied from other camps, the figure might rise to 25 to 30 per cent of the population who have pinned their hopes on National-Socialism. In the case of a plebiscite forced on them from outside, when German money would flow like water, the proportion would be altered to Austria's detriment. The Austrian authorities could, however, easily deal with a National-Socialist attempt to overthrow the Government if this were not supported from outside sources. The real danger lay in the synchronization of a Nazi *putsch* in Austria with an invasion by German military or pseudo-military formations. The danger was not visible at the moment. Mistler did not tell the Commission of the military preparations being carried out on the Bavarian-Austrian frontier, but he probably told the Foreign Minister of this, confidentially. On the other hand, Monsieur Mistler repeated his conviction regarding the common fate of Austria and Czechoslovakia. The false optimism of the Czechoslovak Government should not lead them to believe that the Czech position was not in danger.

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Looking back on events, it may on the whole be said that during the last years of Austria's existence there was no defined desire or earnest effort shown for a policy of organized co-operation between Austria and the Western Powers either in Vienna or Paris or even London. Had any effort been shown on either

side it would have enabled the other to overcome its hesitation. This specially applies to France from that moment when it became clear that both Austria and Czechoslovakia were to be sacrificed to Germany's pressure towards the South-East. But the conviction ruled in both London and Vienna that the key to the situation lay with Italy, so that individual effort would not help, but Mussolini's decision and the development of German-Italian relations were the only things which could have decisive influence on Austria's fate.

VI

AND ITALY?

AN AUSTRO-GERMAN Treaty of Friendship under Italian guarantee! Only under this formula had the Austrian Chancellor agreed to enter into the policy of the 11th July, which was to be for him a policy of *entente* with Germany and Italy *simultaneously*. It is true that an attempt was made to obtain greater independence from Italy by direct treaty with Germany, but Italy was to prevent any German influence on Austrian domestic and foreign policy by her constant presence in Central Europe and the Danube Basin, the "Watch on the Brenner Pass." The dangerous *tête-à-tête* between little Austria and great Germany—what the foreign Press called the rabbit and the boa-constrictor—was only possible so long as Italy was firmly decided to continue the part she had played since the establishment of the Hitler Dictatorship in Germany, namely to guard Austria's independence. It was the historic rôle of Italian post-war policy: to stop any other Power from establishing itself in the district of the former Dual Monarchy and so imperil the Italian position on the Adiratic, in Trieste and on the Alpine border (Brenner).

The transfer of Italy to the Fascist system had certainly altered the political face of the country and brought with it the assumption of a dynamic foreign policy. But for ten years, 1922 to 1932, Italy had, on the whole, remained true to the diplomatic constellation resulting from the war and directed her foreign

policy on co-operation with the Western Powers and on the basis of the League of Nations. There was certainly a Franco-Italian difference of opinion in North Africa and a perpetual tense relationship between Italy and Jugoslavia, the inheritors of the Austro-Hungarian Adriatic sea-front. But these differences and tensions were limited to diplomacy and occasional chess moves of the minority policy. The differences in domestic political system played a subordinate part. The diplomatic battlefield was ruled by the Anglo-Italian friendship and co-operation in the Mediterranean. The stern repression of Marxism in Italy on the one hand, the anti-Fascism of the Comintern on the other, did not prevent almost friendly relations between Italy and the Soviet Union. Italy's attitude was plain regarding the decisive questions of post-war politics, the relations of victorious nations to the conquered, that is the maintenance of conditions brought about by the Peace Treaties. She stood in the anti-revisionist front, with the one exception that she was a sort of moral protector of Hungary's revisionist aims directed against the Little Entente—and also against Italy's Adriatic competitor, Jugoslavia. Italy's policy towards Austria's independence was also significant. There was no opposition from Rome to the various concessions granted piecemeal to Germany by the Western Powers. It was in Italy's interest to see a gradual diminution of the continental preponderance of the French Republic by the re-entry of Germany into the concert of Powers. The Duce was just as pleased with the Locarno Pact as were the British Statesmen. But Fascist Italy kept a strong hand on the veto against the *Anschluss* and on every step which looked like a preparation for an *Anschluss*. No one could have been more eager than Italy to put a stop to the Curtius-Schober plan of an Austro-German Customs Union. Briand's "*L'Anschluss c'est la guerre*" was seconded by an even stronger statement by the Italian delegate to the League of Nations, Signor Scialoja, when the views of the Powers were sought on the Customs Union plan.

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Mussolini had welcomed and directly supported the establishment of a National-Socialist regime in Germany. It was to

his interest that Italy was no longer isolated and had a moral partner, so to speak, to oppose the democratic and anti-Fascist views of the world. He could see his stock rising in the eyes of the Powers as, when opportunity offered, they could point to Italy and so restrain the German policy of revision which Hitler was bringing to an active stage. The plan of a European directorate, that is to say a Four-Power Pact with Italy in the deciding position between Paris, London and Berlin, was very much to his taste. He intended to pick up every advantage which might come his way by the alteration of the European balance of power, and he was determined to play the German card to the best of his ability to bring pressure on the Western Powers. The foundation of the Third Reich first opened the door to Italy for her own imperialist policy, and above all for the establishment of a real colonial empire through the fulfillment of the Abyssinian dream. Hitler was to make it possible to avenge Adowa. The first meeting between Hitler and Mussolini at Stra in June 1934 proved to be a temporary check on this policy. It had negative results. Hitler, a little too frank, had blurted out all his world-power ideas to his Italian colleague and competitor. Besides, the Duce had in the meantime begun to realize that the establishment of a National-Socialist dictatorship had dropped another windfall into his lap: the guardianship of the Danube States in view of the renewed German drive to the East and South-East. Even the Western Powers could but wish Italy to gain a strong position in the Danube Basin which would enable her to bar the way to the Third Reich. The system of the Rome Protocols was not the only advantage of this policy, a favorable adjustment with Yugoslavia and the other States of the Little Entente was also indicated.

Thus Mussolini became the guardian of Austria. His wireless conversations with Paris and London on the night of the 25th July 1934 together with the march of Italian divisions on the Brenner frontier, stopped any inclination Berlin may have had to go to the aid of those carrying out the National-Socialist *putsch* in Austria. For a year and a half the Duce held this line. He was obviously certain that his co-operation with the Western

Powers against the German danger would not only bring him the hegemony of the Danube Basin, but also the fulfillment of his colonial wish, especially the Abyssinian Empire. Immediately before the start of the expedition against the empire of the Negus, he endeavored, by a grandiose maneuver in the South Tyrol, to prove that his policy in East Africa need not lead to an Italian weakening in Central Europe nor to any relaxation of the watch on the Brenner Pass. This was the time in which the Italian Government attached importance to the construction of an ideological rejoinder to the Third Reich and to show that a comparison of Fascism with National-Socialism was not sound. In the spring of 1935, on the occasion of the opening of the Italian Art Exhibition in Paris by Mussolini's son-in-law, Count Ciano, the then Minister of Propaganda, he made a much applauded speech in which he contrasted the solidarity of those countries with Mediterranean culture and Latin clarity, with the dismal dynamics of those barbarians roaming among the Northern woods. At that time Mussolini himself published an article in *Popolo d'Italia* in which Austria's Latin, Catholic and anti-Prussian mission was praised. Vienna was convinced that such words were spoken for once and all.

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Mussolini received a tremendous shock when he suddenly found fifty-two League of Nations countries, under Great Britain's leadership, united against him. The Italian Dictator saw his building, composed of plans and ideas, collapse like a house of cards. He is still suffering from this shock. At times the Duce saw himself already on St. Helena. Napoleon's experience with England seemed a historic warning which could apply to his own situation, and he feared that in Mr. Eden he had found a dynamic opponent with democratic advantages. The political defeat of the movement in France which had only reluctantly agreed to the policy of sanctions, and the formation of a People's Front cabinet only a few months after the same type of government had been set up in Madrid, added to Mussolini's fears. The only way out seemed to be by offering to join

in a common policy with Hitler-Germany. He took this course with the firm conviction that it would form a safeguard against the revenge of the League of Nations—or rather, England. All through the year 1936, and especially after his victory in Abyssinia and the raising of sanctions, the Duce wavered between two policies according to the daily situation. Should he settle the difference between himself and the Western Powers and, satisfied by his Abyssinian conquest, return to the anti-revisionist front, or should he pursue further his co-operation with Germany under Hitler? It must have been the unmistakable tendency to the Left being demonstrated in most countries and the anxiety caused by the Franco-Russian pact which persuaded him to go further on the road he had already taken and enter the Spanish adventure before ending the Abyssinian. He probably reckoned on a speedy victory in Spain which would give him back the freedom of action with Germany after being released from the pressure in the Mediterranean. The development was in quite another direction. The Spanish Civil War daily demanded fresh common efforts from Italy and Germany on the Iberian peninsula. After the revenge of Adowa, a revenge of Guadalajara soon became necessary. But Hitler fixed his price: a free hand for Germany in Central and South-East Europe. Still Mussolini did not think of the extermination of Austria; he looked upon Czechoslovakia as the sole aim.

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Count Ciano stayed in Germany from the 20th to the 25th October 1936 and returned to Italy a firm believer in a straightforward alliance between Rome and Berlin. On November 1st Mussolini made the famous speech in Milan making the official announcement of the Rome-Berlin Axis. Then started the uninterrupted series of German-Italian conversations which culminated in Mussolini's visit to Germany in September 1937 and the Führer's return visit in May 1938.

The serious anxiety in Vienna over the future value of Italy's guarantee of Austria's independence also dated from the Milan speech. To start with, the Duce had energetically protested that out of the German-Italian understanding might grow a general

federal alliance. In the late autumn of 1936 the Austrian Government received from a reliable source exact details of the true importance and the true range of the German-Italian agreement. According to this information, the agreement was confined to the following points:—

- (1) Neither Germany nor Italy would separately enter into any pact which might give England or France the opportunity of playing one Axis Power against the other.
- (2) Both Powers would pursue a common policy in Spain.
- (3) A common policy was also to be undertaken against any Communist danger center which might appear in the future.
- (4) Italy would support Germany's colonial demands in an appropriate form.

In his statement on this arrangement the Duce emphatically added that there had been no stipulation regarding Central Europe, that nothing would stop Italy from watching over the maintenance of Austria's independence and that this had been a *conditio sine qua non* of the Axis.

This sort of declaration did little to eradicate the impression that since the formation of the Axis Austria could not rely on Italian protection as much as hitherto. Proof was to hand when the Gayda article against a Hapsburg Restoration in Vienna was published on the 26th February 1937, that is, after Goering's first visit to Italy (January 1937). The strengthening of this proof was to follow from a responsible quarter.

On the 2nd March 1937 an Austrian diplomat had a conference with Count Ciano, chiefly on the subject of the Gayda article which had raised such a storm. The Austrian declared that in his opinion the article was entirely unnecessary. The Austrian Chancellor had expressed himself perfectly clearly and exhaustively on the subject of a Restoration, in his speech of the 14th February. To see this subject openly dealt with in the leading paper of a friendly country and in an obviously different sense was, to say the least of it, inopportune. Gayda had certainly stressed that Austria's form of government was a domestic affair, but the gist of his article was plainly intended to create

the opposite impression. Already the foreign Press was referring to Germany's insinuations. Here the Austrian diplomat paused for a moment to indicate the significance of what was to follow. Then he went straight for it: "Candidly, Herr Minister," he said, "the interest and prestige of Italy cannot be served if London and Paris are given the impression that your Press is at the disposal of the Reich. I am probably not telling you anything you don't know when I say that French and English journalistic circles claim that a telephone call from Goering to you personally was the origin of this article. The gentlemen in Berlin are said to have demanded from the Italian Government a disavowal of Austrian Monarchism as a return for the good services rendered and still being rendered to Italy by the Reich. And finally, Sir, just think of another not too pleasant repercussion which this article must cause. You yourself, the Duce, all of us, have the keenest desire that the close and friendly relations between the Italian Government and my country shall be shared by both nations and be as intensive as possible. Don't you think that this desire must be counteracted by an article such as Gayda's? The Legitimists are a large and patriotic-minded portion of the population of my country, a substantial support to the Government against subversive efforts. Why offend these people by an unnecessary article?"

Count Ciano was obviously embarrassed by this blunt speech. He went into a long-winded explanation of the motive which forced the Italians to emerge from their former reserve on the question of the Restoration. Gayda's article was a private work but, he would be quite honest, it was published with the consent of the Italian Government. But he could definitely state that there was no question of any German influence on the publication of Gayda's article. All rumors pretending to know that were entirely false. The Italian Government and the Duce's journalists would not allow themselves to be dictated to by foreign countries as to what they were or were not to do. There was no need specially to mention that relations between Italy and Austria had not changed. "Please tell your Chancellor and your Foreign Secretary that Italy's friendship for Austria and

her will to uphold Austria's independence is as great as ever. And I personally should consider it a favor if you would stress that my and the Duce's feelings toward Herr von Schuschnigg are unaltered. We see in him the certain guarantee of the beneficent development of Austria. He has no reason to doubt our honest friendship.

"But all this has nothing to do with the publication of Gayda's article. I shall be just as frank as you have been. Therefore I tell you candidly that the Duce knew of the article before it was published. It had become necessary. You know, of course, that the French Press had started a campaign to bring up the Restoration question as a bone of contention between Italy and Germany. For weeks Paris has quite plainly stated that France was determined to shatter the Axis. We cannot allow a false impression to be spread abroad. The Axis is firm and I, personally, was not unconcerned in the bringing into being of Italian-German co-operation in the international field. For me the Axis is more than a diplomatic move. I am convinced that it is greatly in Italy's interest and in time will determine our foreign policy. Please, look on me as a personal guarantor for the continuance and good functioning of the Axis policy. We are engaged against strong forces in different parts of the world. We need the Axis. And we have to be careful. I don't think that England's great armament program is directed against us—but, as I say, we have to be very careful.

"But you, yourself, need have no fears on that account. I can tell you in confidence that when Goering last visited Rome, I got the renewed assurance that the Third Reich would respect Austria's independence and would abide by the Treaty of the 11th July, with one exception. And that exception is an attempt at a Restoration. Berlin will do everything in her power to prevent that. The question now for Italy, as Austria's true friend, is how she can help that friend without both being shipwrecked. We can't stake your and our existence on an open conflict with Germany whilst we are not on the best of terms with the other Powers. What is there to be done? Gestures such as those of 1934 cannot be repeated in history." When Count Ciano saw

the effect of this last sentence on his companion who had leapt to his feet, he quickly put up a hand to prevent him from speaking. "One moment, don't interrupt me yet! Would you recommend us to follow a policy in which we should have to perform France's will? That wouldn't do, that would *not* do! The Duce would not be dictated to by Monsieur Léon Blum. But don't worry; I repeat, you have no cause for anxiety. We're not going to leave you in the lurch. We have found another way of maintaining Austria's independence. Our aim has remained the same but our means of getting there have changed. Italy must work with Germany, to a certain extent, for Austria's independence, and thereby bind Germany to her. We are defending it now politically as we used to defend it with the threat of bayonets. If we are now going about arm-in-arm with Germany, it's all in Austria's interest. The July agreement, which we welcomed so much, was a proof to us that your Government had correctly summed up the situation and had immediately turned it to account.

"We have never looked upon the Restoration as a serious possibility, either in the past or now. Nor shall we ever in the future. Naturally the question of the form your Government shall take is a purely Austrian domestic affair, but you must allow us to point out to you in a suitable way the dangers you might be running into. Dangers mainly for Austria herself, but also, in view of our relations, for us also, for Italy. We have warned you of these dangers, nothing more."

The Austrian diplomat immediately informed his Government of this conversation. To his report he added that unfortunately he had to confirm that Italian Government circles used many arguments which would not have been so surprising had they come from a National-Socialist. He had pointed out to Ciano his errors and fallacies, but had gained the firm impression that so far as the Restoration question was concerned there was an understanding between Italy and Germany at Austria's expense.

Others were also to receive this impression. Austrian journalists accredited in Rome wrote that during a conversation with

the Italian Minister of Propaganda, Signor Alfieri, there had been a difference of opinion on the estimates of the size of the various political parties in Austria. The Italian figures corresponded exactly with the percentages given out by National-Socialist propaganda. A Hungarian politician who visited Italy in the spring of 1937 gave his impressions after conversations with leaders of the Fascist regime; he must have heard some remarkable things. He was told, for example, that it was a great pity that Schuschnigg was so unpopular in Austria, he had no one on his side. He relied for support of his policy on the Freemasons and the Jews and, in addition, had the disastrous tendency to propitiate the Socialists. He had contested these statements and was told that they had just come from very reliable sources in Rome. To a further question as to whether the informant was an Austrian, he received an affirmative answer, as also to the question of whether he was an Austrian National-Socialist. So he was forced to believe that there were strong and successful forces at work in Italy, under direction from Berlin, to compromise the present Austrian Government in every way possible. He had even been told that Rome knew that there was the danger of a Communist rising in Austria and that it might break out at any moment. He therefore surmised that Germany was intending to engineer an ostensibly Communist rising as a pretext for invasion, and that Italy's neutrality in such a case was being sought.

This sort of information caused great distress in Vienna and was doubtless mainly responsible for the nervous state of the Chancellor, so noticeable during the whole of 1937. Schuschnigg must have realized that Italy was being psychologically treated so as to prevent a serious participation with Austria in the event of a German attack. Friends who saw him during this time found him alternating between blackest pessimism and bouts of unusual energy. He used to show them a document that had been in his desk for about a year, a dispatch from a special Austrian Envoy who had had several conversations with the Duce in the spring of 1936 when, at a conference in the

Italian capital of the States of the Rome Protocols, the Duce had said to him:—

“Europe will pass through her greatest crisis in 1938. The Germans will be armed by then. They are now (this conversation took place shortly after the 7th March 1936) beginning on their Rhine fortifications so that we shall soon see, by the lines of their propaganda, in which direction their next stroke is to be. There is very little doubt that it will be ‘South-East.’ If Austria does not immediately and with all haste make every effort to get her army ready to act at a moment’s notice and to have all her plans cut and dried, she will be lost. Not one of her friends, however ready to help, can do anything in time. So Austria must have an army ready to fight, a mobile even though small army, but one prepared to move as quickly as possible. Only if the Germans, who love ‘accomplished facts,’ know for certain that Austria is willing and capable of taking up arms promptly if only for a short time, if therefore no ‘accomplished fact’ is possible, then they will shy away from any forcible step in that direction. Austria’s army has an extremely difficult task. We are no longer in the year 1866. Her army must be the bearers of patriotism. To that end it must have moral encouragement and material equipment of the most up-to-date weapons. Therefore conscription is essential, it is the basis of everything else. No one will object, Europe will understand. Austria is sound financially, and from the economic standpoint she’s no worse off than many another country. If she wants she can soon get all the material she requires for arming. Italy is prepared to help with large supplies of materials. Very shortly there will be a lot released from East Africa. The strengthening of the army will be of incalculable moral encouragement to the Corps of Officers, to the patriotic population and to youth, and a deterrent to internal and external enemies. There is still time, but not much. Don’t lose this time or else no one will be able to help you. The mechanized troops of the Germans could be in Vienna within a few hours unless they meet with resistance on the frontier and unless Austria has some forces, mobile and prepared.

But an army with so difficult a task must have the feeling that it is being helped in every way possible. Inaction is fatal."

Part of the armament program which Mussolini had developed for Austria had meantime been carried out. He had repeatedly spoken in a similar strain to the Chancellor himself, as General Zehner, Secretary of State for Defense, has stated. Austria had introduced conscription but the armament question was kept within the bounds of the deflation policy of the country. Austria's infantry was perfectly equipped, her artillery excellent but numerically weak, especially the heavier batteries. The light tanks introduced into the Austrian Army proved very satisfactory. On the other hand the equipment of the air force was very insufficient and the pilots were so poorly trained that with very few exceptions they had no experience in night or blind flying; there was not even a start made on the building of a fortification system.

One question was continually being asked: "In case of trouble, will Schuschnigg fight, will he at least make a symbolic resistance until the world's conscience awakes?" Most of those who came into contact with the Chancellor thought that he would. Only those few, who knew, represented the standpoint that the true Schuschnigg only appeared when he showed his horror of war and even of armed resistance to Germany.

In any case he was very pessimistic in the spring of 1937, and traveled in this mood to a conference held in Venice on the 23rd and 24th April between the Chancellor and his colleagues and Mussolini and the leaders of Italian foreign policy and propaganda. The surroundings of this conference were quite enough to make this pessimistic mood much worse. While the Chancellor was laying a wreath on the Italian war memorial, Mussolini pointedly visited the German passenger liner *Milwaukee* which had anchored at the entrance to the canals of Venice, and which was flying a huge Swastika flag immediately outside the windows of the hotel where the Austrians were staying. Intervention by the Austrian delegation was necessary in order that the ship might be given an anchorage which was at least a little less provocative. During the period of the con-

ference, all Italian officials summoned to Venice were instructed to give the impression to the numerous representatives of the world's Press that Italy and Germany had agreed over Austria, and taken up a line which pre-supposed the entry of a National-Socialist Minister into the Austrian Government. Officials of the Italian Foreign and Propaganda Ministries went so far as to tell French and English Press correspondents in Rome that Italian and German relations were now so good that Italy no longer needed to fear a common frontier with Germany, on the contrary it was to be desired for military and economic reasons. It was no longer a secret from the Austrian diplomats that Count Ciano and the Minister Alfieri were inclining more and more to this idea. But Mussolini himself thought differently. At a confidential meeting between him and Schuschnigg in Venice, Mussolini had implored the Chancellor to change his tactics. He repeated Italy's guarantee of Austria's independence very definitely and even went further than did Count Ciano in his conversation with the Austrian diplomat already quoted.

"Were the situation of the 25th July 1934 to be repeated, I should act exactly as I did then," he said to the Chancellor. "But there is one thing I would ask you and that is to bear in mind the necessity of taking the Axis into consideration. Do not get the idea that you will be taking part in a move against Germany and do not do anything in opposition to the July agreement. A gesture or two in favor of your Nazis which will cost you nothing and will leave you your defense intact, wouldn't hurt you. But don't let them talk you into thinking that I have abandoned you. You know that I alone decide the lines of Italian foreign policy."

Schuschnigg was very consoled by these conversations, which also calmed the feelings which had been aroused in Italy by the anti-Italian demonstrations by the Viennese public on the occasion of an Austro-Italian football match on the 21st March, of which the Duce had received a distorted version from German sources. The Chancellor entered the train to return to Vienna in an almost gay mood. On arrival home he met the

most serious incident which till now had darkened his hopes of definite Italian aid against the German policy of penetration. Once again it was an article by Gayda. This time there was no doubt about its entry into Austrian domestic politics. Gayda thought that he could prophesy that a National-Socialist Minister would soon enter the Austrian Government. In a fury, Schuschnigg himself denied this to the Press of the world.

* * *

Austria had obviously become a factor in Italian relations with the other Powers. The defense of Austrian independence was still the aim of Mussolini but no longer an axiom of his foreign policy. Nevertheless he was serious and almost ungracious in the way he received Goering, who had come to Rome a few days after the conference in Venice, full of hope from the Gayda article. The bulky National-Socialist statesman sat expectantly in an armchair by Mussolini's desk, an inviting smile on his broad lips. His whole attitude was that of a man who feels himself practically at home and in the pleasant situation of appearing before one of the great ones of the world, knowing that at his back he has the invisible might of a most powerful empire. Goering had assumed that confidential tone of voice which Mussolini dislikes so much. So when the Duce spoke, his words acted as a cold douche on the former Air Force Captain. "The continuation of the Axis is subject to Austria's independence being respected," the Duce rapped out, "and, may I add so as to avoid any false illusions, I am not able to influence Austrian domestic policy in a National-Socialist direction. It is directed by Herr von Schuschnigg and by him alone." Goering hastened to assure him that Germany was being loyal to the July Treaty which was more than Austria was doing. Painful as was the treatment meted out to National-Socialists in Austria, the Führer was determined to sacrifice them to higher interests. But the foreign policy? Was the Duce aware of the intrigue going on with Czechoslovakia? Tendencies towards a People's Front were appearing in Austria too. France and Russia obviously had their trusted people in the closest circles of the Austrian Government. And the Comintern was

working underground. Mussolini made a slightly irritated gesture. He had discussed all these things with the Austrian Chancellor and was perfectly satisfied with his explanations. So at the moment he saw no need to go on talking about Austria. There was the Spanish problem to discuss.

The result of this conversation was a further breathing space for Austria. Mussolini was very satisfied. His bluff had had the desired effect. The reporters of the world's Press had reacted as required, and, after Venice, had written of the abandonment of Austria by Italy. Confidential inquiries came from Paris and London indicating the disquiet of the Western Powers. What had not been possible during the conference, on account of his Austrian partner, had now come about by Gayda's article. He had become the Sensation of Europe! A few months later London discovered that this article had only been a bluff and that the engineering of the Venice Conference had been Mussolini's chess move against the Western Powers. Now, more than ever, the British Government was convinced that Mussolini was only bluffing when he appeared to leave Germany a free hand in Austria, and it was thought that in case of need he would not hesitate to intervene. The British statesmen believed themselves in a better position now to make a show of taking no interest in Austria and Central Europe so as to cause Mussolini to disclose his batteries and to take steps to defend his interests in the Danube Basin, which would not be very popular in Berlin. Thus both Powers became the prisoners of their tactics and policy of bluff, and only in this way was it made possible for Germany to carry her own bluff to the extreme, to the point where it became real and enabled her to obtain the advantage which originally was beyond hoping for.

So during the year 1937 this three-handed game—London, Rome, Berlin—developed, making all the players, as well as the other Powers, extremely nervous and causing a general feeling of insecurity throughout Europe. The continual extension of the Axis policy was proved by Mussolini's visit to Germany, Italy's entry into the anti-Comintern Pact, Italo-German co-operation in Spain, in the Mediterranean and in the Moham-

medan world (inciting the natives in the French possessions in North Africa, and the Arabs in Palestine). On the other hand, Italy continued to let London know that she was ready for any form of understanding, whilst England was trying alternately to get Italy and Germany to break from the Axis. Italy's participation in the Nyon agreement caused great anxiety in Berlin, and Mussolini was worried by England's constant efforts to come to terms with Germany and also by Germany's peace offensive launched in Paris and London in the summer of 1937. "If Germany comes to an agreement with England, we shall have signed such a treaty half an hour earlier," said the Italian diplomats.

Italy's entry into the anti-Comintern Pact was taken relatively calmly by the capitals of the Western Powers. The importance of this action was not quite clear. If it were only a result of Mussolini's visit to Berlin and a thank-offering for support in Spain, then this gesture did not mean very much. But if it should offer an excuse for a common interference all over the world, say in North Africa and Czechoslovakia for example, then it was serious and might possibly lead to war. Such was the opinion in Paris. From London, the Austrian Ambassador, Baron Franckenstein, reported that Signor Grandi, the Italian Ambassador, was pressing the Foreign Office for an agreement and was offering very agreeable conditions. Sir Robert Vansittart, however, did not entirely share this optimism and was watching the new Rome-Berlin-Tokio alliance with great apprehension, more especially on account of Russia being weakened by internal crises.

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After their return from Venice, Schuschnigg made his report to his Cabinet and Guido Schmidt to the Foreign Affairs Committee. Schuschnigg was very reserved. The Gayda sequel had made him suspicious again in spite of Mussolini's definite assurance. He could not get used to the idea that Austria had become the political shuttlecock in this game between the Powers. He reported that all desires expressed and all hints dropped in Venice were in connection with foreign policy. Neither Mus-

solini nor Ciano had made any suggestion regarding the Austrian National-Socialists. But he had been urged to meet Germany in her foreign policy. Italy needed that, for her prestige was in question and the civil war in Spain had to end in Franco's favor. But for this Germany's help was necessary, and she was being very obstinate about Spain. Mussolini was anxious to come to an understanding with England but was not being too successful in this direction. On the whole Schuschnigg was satisfied, but said that for some time they would be compelled "to keep the umbrella open." Czechoslovakia had been abandoned by Mussolini, and Hungary had been advised to be satisfied with what she had got.

Guido Schmidt made a similar report but added a few details. Mussolini was reckoning on a considerable period before the Spanish question would be settled. Italy had no fear of France, who would be incapable of action for a long time. England after having armed would have plenty of armaments but no men to serve them. There need be no more thought of Prague, no one would help Czechoslovakia, she was totally abandoned. Mussolini had made no request regarding the question of a Restoration except that for the moment it should be put in the background.

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A certain success appeared possible from the diplomatic action of the Western Powers towards the end of 1937. Before Mussolini's journey to Berlin, the Italians had been offered an opportunity of an agreement with the Western Powers. In this connection France, it is true, had pressed for a settlement of the Spanish question, whereby Italy would have been forced back once more to Germany. Italy was already anxious about the concord between England and Germany (the Halifax visit). The open allusions to Austria's danger, which appeared almost daily in the world's Press, were meant to cut Italy adrift from Germany.

There was an idea in Vienna that after all perhaps Austria, profiting by the rivalry of the Powers, might be able to pur-

chase peace. The opinion was that the storm, if any, would burst over Czechoslovakia. There were long discussions in those days whether, in the event of a European conflict, Austria would have to fight as an ally of Germany and Italy or whether she could remain neutral. A plan emerged whereby at least the eastern half of the country should be closed to foreign troops, and the western half given up to the communication needs of Germany and Italy.

At the end of 1937, Burgomaster Schmitz, who could certainly not be called a supporter of a foreign policy entirely directed towards Germany and Italy, expressed himself to a visitor from Paris in a relatively optimistic way. At the forthcoming Conference of Three in Budapest, Italy would not be able to insist on Austria leaving the League of Nations nor on her joining the anti-Comintern Pact. A concrete plan for the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia had been laid before the Hungarian Prime Minister, Daranyi, and his Foreign Minister, Kanya, when they visited Berlin in November. Hungary was to be given Slovakia. But the two Ministers had been very reserved in the matter. They had been told that it was proposed to carry out this plan in the spring or summer of 1938.

The leading men of the Austrian Foreign Office also got the impression of a growing coolness between Rome and Berlin at the end of December 1937 and the beginning of January 1938, or at least an increasing distrust by Italy of her partner in the Axis. At the end of December, Schuschnigg, at a secret sitting of the Austrian Cultural Council, stated that Mussolini had sent a message to him to the effect that under no circumstances did he wish any further friendly advances made by Austria to Germany. Shortly before this a change had taken place in the Italian Embassy in Vienna. After the Ambassador, Salata, had been recalled, Count Ciano had wanted his brother-in-law, Magistrati, Embassy Counsellor in Berlin and a firm adherent of the Axis policy, to be sent as Ambassador to Vienna. But Mussolini would not agree to this, and the former Italian Ambassador in Cairo, Signor Gigli, was appointed. Gigli was a diplomat of the old school of Suvitch, the erstwhile leader of

Italian foreign policy and no particular friend of the new Germany. Schuschnigg himself said that Mussolini had instructed Gigli, before he took up the post, to watch over Austria's independence. Jokingly it had been said that the Axis was the spit on which Austria was to be roasted, to which Mussolini replied: "Trust me, Austria will not be roasted."¹ The new secretary of the Viennese *Fascio* who had recently arrived from Libya, had also quietly been told to do all he could against National-Socialism and for Austria's independence.

Before the Budapest Conference of the States of the Rome Protocols took place, Vienna and Budapest had agreed to lay before Count Ciano a voluminous dossier showing the constant interference by Germany in Austrian and Hungarian domestic politics. Rome was also given full information regarding German propaganda in the South Tyrol. These warnings do not seem to have been entirely without result, for a couple of days before the Berchtesgaden meeting, Count Ciano said to a Hungarian diplomat: "We must continue our work together within the framework of the Rome Protocol and draw round us more tightly the circle which Germany cannot enter."

The optimism regarding the possibility of breaking up the Axis does not seem to have been justified. Signor Grandi got no further with Mr. Eden, and Mussolini was obviously determined to come to an agreement with England alone and to leave France out of it, taking no notice at present of the friendly feelers put out by certain French circles.

In January 1938, a very important French Deputy of the extreme Right undertook a journey to Rome to use his influential connections there for the improvement of relations between the two Latin countries. On his return he told a confidential meeting that he was very pessimistic. Mussolini had certainly received him, but in a definitely unfriendly way. When the Deputy had said that French foreign policy towards Italy had certainly made many mistakes in the last year and a half, but that Italy should make a gesture herself and above all stop the Press campaign against France, Mussolini had re-

¹ *Braunagebraten*: roasted brown. An allusion to the "Brown Shirts."

plied: "I have neither the time nor the desire to bother myself daily about what every single journalist in Italy scribbles. But even if I did wish to give the time to it, I should not at the the present moment be in a position to give other instructions to the Italian Press regarding their attitude towards France." And stressing every word, the Duce had added: "*J'en ai fini avec la France.*" The Deputy said that after that he could do nothing but regretfully take his leave.

Whilst he turned a cold shoulder to France, which he held responsible for the slow development of the Spanish situation, Mussolini was daily growing more impatient to sign a treaty with England on account of Italy's great economic and military difficulties. So pressure on London had to be increased. Berlin provided the pretext: the Berchtesgaden ultimatum to Austria. Now Mussolini could show that he could not be forced to abandon the Axis on Austria's account. He therefore decided to make those new concessions to Germany, which in the Venice days had only been bluff. He would agree to National-Socialists entering the Austrian Government and to forcing her foreign policy to fall into line. For that reason Schuschnigg's cries for help after Berchtesgaden fell on deaf ears. Mussolini told the Chancellor that he could not intervene with Berlin, because firstly such intervention would have no effect, secondly he could not go on forever getting mixed up in the relations between the two German States, and thirdly the solidarity between Fascism and National-Socialism was not merely tactical but real.

Here again, all this was done to make an impression on England. As soon as Mussolini had got what he wanted—Mr. Eden's overthrow and Mr. Chamberlain's consent to an Anglo-Italian agreement—he encouraged Schuschnigg once more and sent a message to the effect that he would be glad if the Chancellor would be firm in his speech on Germany and emphasize that the limit of concessions had been reached. A highly-placed Italian diplomat told a leading Austrian personality, whom he knew to have been in favor of resistance, that Mussolini had purposely refrained from helping Schuschnigg so as to give

England a good fright because Great Britain thought to the last that the problem of the independence of Austria would break up the Rome-Berlin Axis. He had hoped that this would lead to a genuine treaty between Great Britain and Italy. Now that this pressure on London had met with success, Italy would again encourage Austria to remove one by one the concessions given to the National-Socialists.

This optimism was not shared by the Austrians. For whilst Mussolini thought that he had reached a permanent solution by the so-called "reduced independence" of Austria and her position as a link in the Axis, Hitler looked upon it as a partial solution only, and immediately after his success with the Berchtesgaden ultimatum started to prepare the next step. While the Duce saw him still, more or less, on the Bismarck line, Hitler had, in fact, departed from this line a long time and thereby had maneuvered Italy into a position which left her no freedom of movement at all; only the breaking of the Axis with all its consequences was left. So Italy also was made a sacrifice to the policy instituted by the July agreement and so far as bluff was concerned had to own Germany her master. Whilst the Duce was still thinking of a way to save the situation, the die had long been cast in Berlin and the decision taken to seek an indispensable success in foreign politics by the annexation of Austria.

VII

THE DECISION TO OCCUPY AUSTRIA IS MADE

TOWARDS THE END of December 1937, Secretary of State Guido Schmidt received a personal letter from the British Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden, in which he was warned of a new and imminent German offensive against Austria. This information from the man responsible for British foreign policy, coincided with that received from other sources.

Adolf Hitler had surveyed the diplomatic field. The need for action was thrust on him by the internal situation in Germany, the growing dissatisfaction of the people and the ever plainer opposition by all the Conservative forces. After the 7th March 1936 and in view of the attitude of the Western Powers toward the Spanish civil war, the temptation for Berlin to make an attack on Czechoslovakia was very great.

He had his reasons for choosing this path. From the start he was free so far as Italy was concerned. The co-operation of the Axis Powers could not be endangered by a German action against Czechoslovakia. The bonds of the Little Entente had become so slack that neither Yugoslavia nor Rumania were prepared to risk their own lives for the sake of their Czechoslovak ally. In Hungary there were influential forces, amongst them the Regent, who, guided by Italian and German pressure, had decided to concentrate their policy of revision on Czechoslovakia, and this made participation even in a military action a pos-

sibility. Polish foreign policy under Colonel Beck had remained intractable in spite of efforts from Paris to bring about an agreement between Prague and Warsaw. Beck was certain that German intentions in connection with Czechoslovakia would be carried through without any serious resistance from the Western Powers, so that it was not in Polish interests to enter into an agreement with Prague. He did not wish to back the wrong horse. Berlin's very far-fetched hopes of getting Warsaw under certain conditions to take part in an attack on Czechoslovakia were not fulfilled, it is true, but a friendly neutrality by Poland sufficed. Naturally Berlin knew just as well as London and Paris that neither Poland nor Rumania would allow Russia to march through their countries under any circumstances. So far as Russia was concerned, it was thought that the Japanese threat in the Far East would keep her quiet and that the Red Army had been so weakened by its "decapitation" due to the internal crisis, that intervention was very improbable, more especially if France were not going to mobilize, for Russia had made her action dependent on France moving first. The views of the British Cabinet entered into this question and they had decided not to take any action in Central Europe.

There was one unfulfilled condition to the starting of an action against Czechoslovakia: Austria must take part. But that meant that Austria must fall into line with her foreign and military policies. Everyone who could be listened to by Hitler, and not only the Generals and the diplomats, tried to persuade him to let Austria take her own course according to the recipe of Bismarck for the maintenance of Austrian independence, to animate the Treaty of July 11th and so gradually reach a position which would eventually lead to the "Danzigisation" of Austria: the "cold annexation."

It has already been said that in addition to the military, the administration circles and the diplomats of the old school, there was also Goering and all those of the N.S.D.A.P. sworn to his person and policy, who had been of this mind for some time. Their outstanding exponent was the German Ambassador in Vienna, von Papen. In Austria itself they could reckon on

the support of a large part of the "Ultra-National" Party, the National-Socialists of the Seyss-Inquart type who could hope that, in the event of "Danzigisation," power would come to them, the Catholic Bridge-builders and finally Guido Schmidt and his friends in diplomacy and the bureaucracy. The co-operation was marvelous. At least, so far as Goering was concerned it was only marvelous till November 1937 and his last talk with the Secretary of State, Guido Schmidt. The "Führer's Special Commissioner for the Administration of the Four-Year Plan" passed through some critical hours. The financial position was serious. When he and Schacht began to work together a bitter enmity grew up between them which led to the resignation of the President of the Reichsbank from his post as Provisional Minister for Economic Affairs. The heads of the *Reichswehr*, General Fritsch and the Minister Blomberg, who came more and more under his influence, were won over for the arguments against the Four-Year Plan. The deep anxiety of the Foreign Minister, Baron von Neurath, has already been mentioned.

Goering subordinated all other considerations to those which might lead to the success of the Four-Year Plan. He was convinced that access to Austrian raw materials and her surplus of agricultural products was a condition for this success. But Schuschnigg's Government did not show any inclination to agree to this proposal nor, in view of the German demands, to a military alliance. This, after the favorable impression gained by the German military mission at the Austrian Army's summer manoeuvres, was particularly urgent. In addition there was Goering's personal rage at not being invited to pay an official visit to Vienna. Guido Schmidt had brought him an invitation to hunt. Schuschnigg, after his experience with von Neurath's visit, would only agree that Goering should be invited in his private capacity to hunt in the Tyrol and then only in the Karwedel Mountains where no one ever went; in any case the most he would have conceded would have been Steyr. Guido Schmidt had handed over the invitation, but Goering insisted on Vienna. The Austrian Nazis were to be told that Goering had

said in conversation on the 24th November: "The Austrian Government invited me a short time ago to an official chamois-hunt. I told the Secretary of State my conditions but the Austrian Government could not see its way to comply. Thereupon another invitation followed to which I gave a detailed reply and took up the following position:

"If I must go to Austria to visit the Austrian Government, it will be a sign to my political associates there that a radical change is to take place in the treatment of Austrian National-Socialists by their Government. I will not go to Austria unless my political associates are given the opportunity to salute me freely and openly." The illegal *Oesterreichische Beobachter* in its January 1938 issue sharply criticized the fact that Goering was not invited to pay an official visit.

Since he had received the letter in which Guido Schmidt had, on Schuschnigg's instructions, refused the demands made by Goering in November 1937, this influential man had become the greatest champion of a policy to take the strongest steps against Austria, regardless of consequences. From diplomatic sources in Berlin it was learned that in the middle of January, Goering had said to a leading German industrialist: "It is essential that Austria be drawn into the Four-Year Plan. We cannot do without Austrian timber and Austrian ore. But we have not got the necessary cash to pay for these in schillings as Herr Schuschnigg and Herr Kienboeck wish. So by the end of March at the latest another solution must be found which gives us the right to the Austrian mines and forests."

* * *

A lonely man was seated in his country house at Obersalzberg near Berchtesgaden, thinking deeply over the situation. Adolf Hitler's glance was directed over the snow-covered mountainous landscape, towards Austria. Innumerable times during the last five years had he looked in that direction and each time his heart was filled with regret. That was "German" land, the land of his birth, and yet it was deprived of the guidance of the Führer to whom the Reich was beginning to pay almost divine honors. When Hitler thought of Austria he remembered a joy-

less youth, insults real and imagined, vague and shapeless dreams of future fame and of power over men. Memories arose of his homelessness in Vienna and of his passionate political discussions with the "Red" and the "Black." And always he would tell himself that he must conquer his native land. He owed himself this last ratification, this last triumph over his inferiority complex, this last proof of his mission. The Führer could never think calmly of Austria, his feelings were too strong. All who have come into contact with him during the last few years say that there are two subjects he will never discuss: Jews and Austria. A wild outburst was the answer to every attempt to draw him into a conversation on these topics. His entourage knew what it cost him to have to wait five years for Austria after his conquest of power in Germany, not daring to take the step, not being able simply to override Mussolini, the Western Powers, and hostile forces in Austria.

At last he had reached that point. For the last time the Führer went over the sequence of action which he meant to, which he *had* to, carry out in the coming year if he were to overcome the troubles in the Reich itself. But first Czechoslovakia? Certainly there was a lot in favor of that. But the risk of war was great. Those Frenchmen had spoken much too plainly during the last few months of their intention to fulfill their alliance obligations to Czechoslovakia, and even though England were to try and keep out of Central European questions she would have to come in on the side of France in case of war. No, the time was not ripe for an attack on Czechoslovakia. The leaders of the Reich Army had been quite decided: the German Army was not ready for war. Adolf Hitler did not know very much about economic questions, but if he were told that the stores of raw materials and provisions in Germany were not sufficient for a war, then he had to take the experts' word for it. According to the latest dispatch from a German emissary, Rumania seemed to be preparing for a reaction. Apparently King Carol, under Franco-British pressure, was going to break once more with the scarcely formed pro-German Government of Goga. Austria and Hungary would not

join against Czechoslovakia. This man Schuschnigg had dared to say No, whilst Daranyi and Kanya had been most reserved during the conversations in Berlin and had remained cold to all the attractive promises of Hungary's share in the Czechoslovak booty.

No, the risk was still too great. So Czechoslovakia must be second on the list. The barrage of propaganda for a bloodless conquest had not done its work yet. Those gentlemen in Prague must first be given a thorough shock so that they should feel encircled and deserted. "I must have Austria," murmured the Reich Chancellor. But this time it was not a proposal for the vague future. Adolf Hitler felt that the moment had arrived. His voices which had "hardly ever" deceived him—how far behind lay that year of the unfortunate Munich *Bürgerbräu Putsch!*—began to speak. A magic force came from them. His decision was made before his plans. Suddenly the whisperings of his "faithful," the sharp, inciting words of Goebbels, the violent outbursts of Goering, the vague allusions of Ribbentrop, which he had listened to with apparent indifference, all began to take effect. They were like a heap of gunpowder stowed away in the depths of his mind, into which a burning brand had just been thrown. Hitler began to compose the speech which was to annihilate the "Jesuit" Schuschnigg when they met, and that must be soon. He would force him to his knees before the greatest genius ever given to Germany, the God-sent Führer. Hitler smacked his lips over this scene. He could not sit any longer in his armchair looking towards Austria. He had to wander through the rooms of his house, thinking over the setting of the scene, allotting the places.

And then suddenly his thoughts became clear and reasonable. The action was prepared, down to the last detail. A plan existed, designated R.H. The Austrian Nazis had it and had already begun to study their parts. R.H. was Rudolf Hess, the Führer's deputy as leader of the Party, a man with an unquestionable gift of organization, cold calculation, a cynical deliberation and one unaffected by moral considerations so long as

his goal was reached. R.H., here was the man, the master, to achieve the desired end, by provocation if necessary.

The R.H. plan should be carried out. The order to begin action should be given. Who was to stop it? The Western Powers? England would not move even for Austria if France remained passive. And on this point the dispatch from Warsaw regarding the Delbos-Beck conversation was most reassuring. When Beck gave it as his firm conviction that Austria was lost and that the *Anschluss* was only a matter of a few weeks, the Frenchman had not said a word. France had no alliance with Austria. No, so far as the Western Powers were concerned, it was only a matter of waiting for the psychological moment. A little week-end surprise such as he had so often prepared for his cousins on the other side of the Channel and for the gentlemen on his side. If luck were with him it would present him at the right moment with a Government crisis in France; after all, Chautemps' Cabinet was only a passing phase and would soon begin to totter. Adolf Hitler had never felt so strong and ready for action as now. The Reichstag had been convened for the 30th January, the fifth anniversary of his "seizure of power." In his speech on this occasion, to which he was already looking forward, he would spring his Austrian surprise on the world.

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Just about the same time Kurt von Schuschnigg was also preparing his plan of action for the next few months. The internal situation in Austria was not developing too favorably. Unemployment was rising. Sales of Austrian products were difficult; trade restrictions by foreign countries were increasing all the time. The fall in the main continental currencies presented a serious handicap to tourist traffic. Austria was beginning to become an expensive country for foreigners on account of the exchange, and the schilling could not be devalued as it was necessary to maintain its internal purchasing power. With the increasing domestic distress the mood of the people became worse. There was no doubt of the discontent of large numbers of the middle classes, the peasants and the working classes. The

Chancellor had certainly announced that 1938 would be the year when work would be abundant. But he did not see how to put through a program on a grand scale.

Schuschnigg also realized that the discontent was not based on economic and social grounds alone. Austria was moving towards a moral crisis. The policy introduced by the July Treaty was a policy without any "go," without any attractive force. The Patriotic Front was anything but a crystallization point of the Austrian ideal, a point from which might radiate a great political and patriotic mysticism. Political *élan* was confined to the Legitimists. A rather frightening political weariness, almost a horror of politics, was to be seen amongst the population. That is the period of mental stagnation of a people, in which the masses will say: "It must be changed, we don't care how." It is a period when the people are ready to welcome any stirring event, even if it be a catastrophe, as a release from their mental apathy. Domestic politics seemed to have come to a dead end. There seemed to be no satisfaction possible. The illegal National-Socialist opposition had noticeably stiffened; those men whom the Chancellor had picked out as connecting links with the "Ultra-Nationals" were intractable, appearing to look upon themselves as advisers to the opposition and in no way as bearers of a national political mission. Friends pressed the Chancellor to give up his vain attempts to convert unconvertible opponents. A field of boundless opportunities was opened up on the Left. An understanding could easily be reached with the former Social-Democrats which would lead them into the main Austrian Front. The Trade Unions and the Social Workers' Associations in the Patriotic Front were splendid starting points. A great step forward would be taken by a program granting a few of the workers' demands. The Chancellor felt that something ought to be done. But an understanding with the Left might cause political complications from outside. He knew that he would have to do it one day. But he obstinately clung to his idea of first completing some action satisfying to the Right. His mind was continually working on the problem of the possibilities of carrying this out and the right men

to do it. Animation was also necessary in State political matters. There was no echo from the people when it was announced that the Dollfuss system of government had at last been approved together with the necessary modification which the creator of this system, the former Chancellor Ender, had required. Schuschnigg knew that even in the broadest Catholic circles the experiment of a "Christian Corporative State" was looked upon as a failure. The most distinguished Catholic sociologists of his own and foreign countries warned him against confusing the social program developed in the encyclical "*Quadragesimo Anno*" with the practical measures which, on the basis of the "corporate State," had been promised in Austria, but which in essentials had remained on paper. The Chancellor's watchwords were the provision of work and increased activity in a constitutional direction, but he himself was skeptical regarding their powers of attraction.

In the end it was a hand-to-mouth existence that was led both in home and foreign policy. A life full of bureaucratic restrictions and filled with petty personal intrigues. It was proved even in Austria that suppression of parties drives out the party spirit in favor of personal politics. We used to have six parties, the critics said, now we have sixty cliques in bitter enmity with each other.

A campaign for a plebiscite in Austria was started by the British Press, the origin of which it was not difficult to guess. "The time is not ripe for a plebiscite," declared Schuschnigg to a colleague who had told him of his impressions abroad. "So long as one foreign voice demands it, it will not take place. On the other hand I was all in favor of hastening on the elections even amongst the working classes. But the gentlemen of the Trade Unions who first suggested it are now, apparently, frightened by their own courage. The carrying through of the Constitution will take a year or two to complete. Tell them an election of a new President is out of the question. The rumors that I want to make myself 'Federal Leader' and force Herr Miklas from his position are simply absurd. Must I go on repeating that I neither am nor want to be a Dictator? Until the

Constitution is complete we must go on feeding foreign countries with fiction, such as, for instance, the number of members of the Patriotic Front, which embraces two-thirds of the voting power of the country. That, after all, is a kind of plebiscite for an independent Austria. I will certainly find some way of judging the will of the Austrian people regarding independence, one that will be adequate for abroad as well. I know that that has become necessary. But I'll tell you frankly that so far I have not found the way." Schuschnigg was thinking of visiting his Portuguese colleague, Salazar, from whom he hoped to receive inspiration, for he saw a closely related system between Portugal and Austria.

Burgomaster Schmitz thought differently. He spoke plainly against an election on the basis of professions, especially to the Trade Unions. He agreed with Ender. Once before at an appropriate moment the question of a plebiscite had arisen in order to emphasize to foreign countries Austria's will for independence. But even Schmitz did not appear quite certain which path should be taken to solve the internal political difficulties. He, like Schuschnigg, did not consider that a Restoration was possible at the moment on account of foreign opposition.

* * *

In the midst of these deliberations on how Austrian political life could be given new inspiration and a policy of economic activity could be introduced, disturbing news was received regarding the plans and intentions of the National-Socialist illegal party and their support by the Third Reich. It was known that the Austrian National-Socialists were impatiently urging Berlin and Munich to action. They were insisting that Austria should be forced to a strict adherence both to the spirit and the letter of the July Treaty. The Opposition was provoked by the various interviews given by the Austrian Chancellor to the representatives of foreign newspapers emphasizing the chasm dividing patriotic Austria from National-Socialism. These declarations were claimed to be an offense against Austria's "all-German" obligations, for "German" is National-Socialist and a Chancellor who sees an "abyss between Austrian ideology

and the doctrines ruling in the German Reich," can no longer be looked upon as a man who can work in satisfactory co-operation with the Reich. The promises given to the National Opposition had only been partially fulfilled and then only for the sake of appearance. Actually the whole system ruling in Austria was based on insurmountable suspicion of everything which came from Germany. The desire for complete unison with the Reich was absent. Therefore the "National" population could but feel oppressed and disfranchised, as they never did before the July Treaty. If the Government did not alter its ways there would certainly be an explosion.

News of National-Socialist propaganda became even more threatening. It was working specially hard with the granting of economic advantages, which was easy in view of the political attitude of most of the Austrian employers. But direct financial support was also freely offered. The Nazis were particularly busy in the Tyrol among the former members of the *Heimwehr*, especially those of this semi-military formation who were armed.

The campaign of intimidation also went happily on its way. It was known that the Gestapo were in possession of a very complete list of all those who were militant opponents of National-Socialism. Special attention was given to the extension of National-Socialist fighting units. A German emissary, Herr von L..., arrived in Vienna with 60,000 schillings for the S.S. A great many plans were made for the preparation of a National-Socialist *putsch*. In January 1938 a discreet warning was received in Vienna from *Reichswehr* circles. A scheme had been prepared by which any provocative action was to bring about an Austrian "Reichstag fire." The murder of the German Military Attaché or of the Ambassador von Papen himself, which would be attributed to the Patriotic Front or probably to the Legitimists, would be the signal for the outbreak of a *putsch*, during which German intervention would take place.

Other members of the National Opposition spoke of proposed pressure by the Austrian illegal National-Socialists and the Third Reich, which would force Schuschnigg to resign, when he would be replaced by some neutral person, and there would be

a National-Socialist Vice-Chancellor appointed. Any resistance to this change of government would be defeated by removing the executives and the opportunity seized to establish an even more pro-Nazi Government. After these first steps had been taken, a plebiscite could quietly be prepared which would then insure Austria's transference to a National-Socialist regime.

All this information and the rumors came from sources which were regarded as reliable and well-informed, some from Herr von Papen's immediate circle itself. They were confirmed by the news of military preparations on the far side of the German frontier. There were movements of strong formations of S.A. and S.S. troops towards Southern Bavaria. The Alpine Corps was strengthened. Finally a hand-written document was received from an unquestionably reliable Austrian source in Germany, reporting the removal of the Austrian Legion from their garrisons in North, Central and West Germany to their original base in South Bavaria. This document contained every detail of the organization of the Legion, the state of its training, its equipment and its command by officers of the Reich Army. The Legion had been brought up to its full strength of 40,000 men, had its own General Staff including an Austrian Artillery General and a former Colonel of the Austrian Army. Special delegates from the Reich War Ministry were attached to this staff and also a former Austrian Cavalry Captain as *liaison* officer with the Reich Air Ministry. The plans for invasion were ready. They provided for an advance in three columns: The first was to start from Reichenhall and penetrate through Lofer as far as Pinzgau. The second, leaving from Freilassing, had Salzburg for its objective; it was to advance as far as the Salzkammergut and join up at Linz with the third column which had started from Passau, and together they were to make a combined march on Vienna. For this purpose the Austrian Legion had been completely mechanized. Its former S.A. service training had been substituted by training similar to that of the Reich Army. Its efficiency was therefore of a very high order, for since 1936 almost every member of the Legion had taken a course in the *Reichswehr*. According to the document, the leaders of the

Gestapo were working hand in hand with the Legion's Command. The Austrian Gestapo was already organized and ready to act immediately after the occupation of the country. They were working from an index which showed the political views of practically every Austrian citizen. The Gestapo had their trusted men in every important Austrian office, especially with the police, and had detailed information on all the secret arrangements of the Austrian administration officials.

All Austrian emigrants in Germany who were in the National-Socialist fighting units or the Austrian Illegals, were very optimistic. Every message agreed that these circles spoke with assurance of the solution of the Austrian question in accordance with National-Socialist requirements, and in a very short time.

There was no doubt about it; the action against Austria had been decided on and the necessary spirit had been instilled into the men. All material preparations had been made.

VIII

A PLOT IS DISCOVERED

THE RUMORS, whether of an imminent Nazi *putsch* in Austria or of an ultimatum from Germany, became so insistent towards the end of the year that the Austrian Government felt bound to investigate them. The opportunity was presented by an interview with Dr. Tavs being published by a Jugoslav paper, the *Slovenski Glas*. Dr. Tavs was a member of the Committee of Seven in the Teinfaltstrasse, and in this interview he had set out all the alleged promises to the National Opposition which Schuschnigg had not kept. On account of this interview the Secretary of State for Public Security, the Police President Skubl, had undertaken a search of the offices in the Teinfaltstrasse. It was evident that this place was looked upon as safe under the cloak of the internal pacification agreement and the authority which the Committee of Seven had received from the Chancellor. In the Teinfaltstrasse was stored all the secret material of the National-Socialist illegal party. Corroboration was found of all the lists discovered nine months before in the Helferstorferstrasse, and so the co-operation of the legal and illegal organizations of the Austrian National-Socialists was proved. The whole illegal framework of the National-Socialist fighting units, the courier service and the political leaders in the country were no longer a secret after the discoveries in the Teinfaltstrasse. But a much more important, even sensational, discovery was made. The R.H. plan was found! It proved that the

rumors of a National-Socialist *putsch*, its preparation, and the final German *démarche*, were well founded. This *démarche* was to be based on the July Treaty. The reasoning was most interesting. It showed that, from a National-Socialist point of view, the July Treaty was a perfect covenant. It was a covenant whose wording was such that it could also be made the excuse for breaking it on account of non-observance by the other side. Clause 3 provides for the recognition of the German character of the Austrian State, and this Schuschnigg thought he could interpret in his own way—the Government of the second German State was just as able to determine what was German for its own province as was the Third Reich for *its* own. But from the start the National-Socialists had regarded this as an elastic clause and a strait-jacket for Austria. In his interviews and declarations to the non-German Press, they maintained that Schuschnigg had made it perfectly clear that he was no longer abiding by the July agreement. Therefore—still according to the German interpretation of the 11th July Treaty—he was unworthy to be the Head of the Government of a German State. In the interests of her oppressed compatriots on the other side of the frontier, Germany had the moral duty to put an end to existing conditions and to demand Schuschnigg's resignation. This was by no means an offense against the Treaty or an intervention in Austrian domestic politics, but on the contrary, an act of faith to the Treaty, by which its execution by the other partner is demanded and if necessary enforced. The same arguments were used in the case of the Concordat with the Catholic Church—also completed by von Papen—as an excuse for a keen cultural battle and an uninterrupted series of offenses against the Concordat. If in history there is one document in which the National-Socialist "Treaty Morals" are free from pretext and at the same time the fate of all who enter into an agreement with the Third Reich is not subject to a double meaning, then that document is the R.H. plan. The most despicable breach of an agreement, the most flagrant violation of a solemn undertaking not to interfere in Austrian domestic politics, and to recognize Austria's sovereignty and independence, is contained

in the preamble to this plan in the guise of "faith" to the Treaty.

An ultimate German *démarche* is to "remind" the Austrian Government of this Treaty and demand the Federal Chancellor's resignation, whilst aeroplanes, tanks, mechanized units of the Reich Army, etc., etc., shall be mobilized on the frontier. A corresponding preparation of a military nature must follow on the Yugoslav border. It was alleged that agreement on this point had been recently reached with the Yugoslav Government. This agreement, if there ever was one, must have referred to the case of an armed Restoration; it was thus in the nature of assistance to the legal Austrian Government. Jugoslavia then, according to the R.H. plan, was to be the dupe made to mobilize on account of a false German announcement ("Legitimist conspiracy"). Here was plainly an analogy with the Reichstag fire.

Italy, continues the R.H. plan, will not be able to intervene as she will be much too occupied at that time with other matters—which of course German propaganda will have previously arranged. She will certainly do nothing against the removal of the Austrian Government under the pretext of faith to the Treaty. So it is to be presumed that the formation of an Emergency Cabinet under a "neutral" Chancellor with a very active, absolute National-Socialist Vice-Chancellor and with three active Nazi Ministers, will go through without a hitch. Within six months the Emergency Cabinet is to effect a gradual glide into a completely Nazi Cabinet by a form of "People's vote." Should unrest set in, so much the better, for then it will be the pretext for setting up a still more energetic Cabinet.

The R.H. plan contained two lists of Ministers in the event of Schuschnigg's Cabinet being dissolved. They were set out separately but coincided in so far as they both gave the name of Seyss-Inquart as Minister of Public Security. Guido Schmidt was named as Foreign Minister; Glaise-Horstenau was to fill the important post of *liaison* Minister between the German and Austrian Armies, that is an official extension of the position he filled during the war so greatly to the satisfaction of the German Army Chiefs, who never had any complaint to make of him—he worked less well in the interests of Austria-Hungary and

against the constant German interference in the political and military affairs of the Danube Monarchy.

But there were worse things than that: plans for the provocation which was to start a National-Socialist rising and release the German intervention. These plans provided for the assassination of the German Ambassador, von Papen. It came to light later that originally it was the German Military Attaché, General Muff, who was to be the sacrifice to this provocative action. The hint had come from Germany. General Muff was supposed to be the friend and confidant of the Army Chief, General Fritsch. But apparently there were certain Germans who took the view that this opportunity to kill two birds with one stone was too good to be lost. The person of the German Ambassador, Herr von Papen, must surely be of greater importance than General Muff. There are influential men in the Third Reich who today still regret that Papen did not meet his intended fate on July 30th, 1934. These men were probably not sorry when they saw that the provocation plan provided for the murder of Herr von Papen and not General Muff. A section of the notorious S.S. *Standart* 89 was to be detailed to carry out this "commission." The members of this section were to put on the uniform of the "Iron Legion," one of the internal guard formations drawn from the Legitimist Party. This would not be difficult, because the uniforms of the "Iron Legion" were very like those of the S.S., and also because the Nazis had succeeded in getting a number of their men into this Legion. It was also to be arranged that some trusted National-Socialists and some watchmen belonging to their illegal organizations were to be first on the scene and in the confusion arising from the assassination of the German Ambassador at the door of his Embassy—Herr von Papen was to be killed as he was leaving the house—were to carry out the arrest and obtain statements from which it would be clear that the "Iron Legion" was responsible.

Naturally this plan was much discussed and whispered about in the circles of the initiated. In any case rumors filtered through. In view of conditions in the Austrian Nazis' camp, the quarrels between cliques and the personal jealousies, it was not

a matter for surprise that Herr von Papen also got to hear of it. In great agitation he sought out the Chancellor, begging for protection against a plot by the "Iron Legion." Following denunciation by National-Socialists, a member of the "Iron Legion," the former National-Socialist, Walter von Leubuscher, who had returned to the Austrian cause, was arrested on the 5th January by the Viennese police on suspicion of preparing an attempt on the life of the German Ambassador and kept in prison for several weeks.

As in the case of all documents found in the Teinfaltstrasse the Austrian Chancellor did not allow the plan for Papen's assassination to be made public but decided to make use of it at the appropriate moment. He was begged by the German Ambassador as a personal favor to keep it absolutely secret.

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The discoveries in the Teinfaltstrasse proved, in addition to all else, that Chancellor Schuschnigg had been shamefully deceived by the members of the Committee of Seven, and that neither they nor their Reich abettors had ever had any intention of upholding that Austrian sovereignty and integrity so solemnly agreed to in the July Treaty. Leopold's statement that they would stand by Austria's independence and the Dollfuss Constitution had in particular proved to be merely a ruse.

The raid on the headquarters in the Teinfaltstrasse had at first caused great commotion in the Austrian Nazis' camp. The demonstration arranged for the 30th January, the anniversary of the seizure of power in Germany, did not take place. The confiscation of materials, the arrest of Dr. Tavs and numerous leading functionaries of the illegal party caused a temporary crippling of National-Socialist activities. Nevertheless not all the Austrian Nazis went about with long faces. The militant circles, the S.S., S.A. and particularly the Hitler Youth, were really very pleased. They had always been opponents of the tactics of lawful penetration and pacts with the Government, even though dishonest. They must have thought that there would probably now be a quick finish to the pacification agreement and that then they could start the reign of terror prepared

on the 1933-1934 pattern. Attacks on leaders of the opponents, especially in the provinces, intimidating attacks on the Jewish business world, but above all attacks on the headquarters of the Legitimist movement, were some of their intentions. The members of the S.S. had received instructions to join in some way the various "Ultra-National" clubs, particularly the gymnastic and sport associations and the cultural organizations, also the Austrian gliding clubs, the "Ewask" swimming club and the "German and Austrian Alpine Club." Further, such organizations as "Recreation," "The German Stage," "The Evangelical Union," "Anti-Semitic Union" were all named as peculiarly suitable for National-Socialist penetration. The Hitler Youth had tried hard to dig themselves in to the "Young Vienna" and "Young Urania" clubs, the Austrian Air-Raid Protection League and the various youth national movements in sport, gymnastics and hiking.

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When Ambassador von Papen entered his office in the German Embassy on the day after the Teinfaltstrasse raid, it was noticed that he had a very satisfied expression on his face. He was obviously much less worried than he had been during the last few days, when he had seemed very nervous. Today he felt safe at last. After a long talk with his secretary, von Ketteler, he dictated a dispatch to the Reich Foreign Minister, von Neurath, in which he informed him of the police action in the Teinfaltstrasse. A document had been found there giving instruction as to the duties of Austrian National-Socialists in case of a German and Yugoslav invasion. This document was a flagrant breach of the Treaty of the 11th July and it was obvious that the Austrian National-Socialists must have received their information from the Reich Party Headquarters. Papen launched forth into a fierce attack on Tavs; this man had always been very active, and the Embassy had always had to exercise special care as regards the intervention he was always demanding. The activities of the illegal party had often given cause for a disturbance of relations between the Embassy and the German Colony in Vienna, with the "Ultra-Nationals" and

with the Austrian officials. It was now essential that a gesture be made to enable him to dissociate himself from the illegals and their German employers.

After sending off this dispatch von Papen remained a long time in earnest conversation with Herr von Ketteler. "I hope that Neurath will be able to do something with my dispatch," he said. "Now it is important that the gentlemen in the Bendlerstrasse should be taught a lesson. There never has been a better opportunity for an attack than today. If Neurath misses it, Fritsch will certainly take it. Hitler must feel himself compromised with his deputy R.H. The Austrians have now got a terrible weapon in their hands, and I alone am in a position to see that they don't use it. Whatever happens, I must see Schuschnigg today. You might find out what those officials, with whom you've made such useful contact, are thinking about matters in general. The Austrians must be prevented from taking too energetic action against the illegal party, because they might be driven to reply. Our aim now must be to reinforce the July agreement and to improve the co-operation in party circles." Von Ketteler did not share his Chief's optimism. "You know that Austria has always been the one thing Hitler has longed for," he replied. "I shouldn't be at all surprised if he now takes the Austrian Nazis under his wing morally and perhaps materially." "He's quite capable of that," was the Ambassador's opinion. "What have the members of the Party here got to say about it all?" "Stein has apparently already made his report. He's furious. I saw Krüger, the correspondent of the *Essener National-Zeitung*, just now. He was raving and calling Tavs every name under the sun. Through his clumsiness he has endangered the whole organization of the Austrian National-Socialists, perhaps even wrecked it. He's even jeopardized Hitler's own position. The Führer's intention to accuse Austria of breaking the Treaty of July 11th in his Reichstag speech has now been made impossible. Everything was really organized from the Teinfaltstrasse. Now the police have got proof that all that window breaking in the Jewish shops originated there. They can't do anything to Leopold, he's much too cunning to

let himself get compromised. Krüger told me that Tavs' successor was to be a fellow called Eckinger or Erkinger. In any case Krüger himself seems to be in a bit of a mess. That is probably why he's so furious, because he's frightened for himself. He recently published an interview with Tavs and he's shivering for fear that they found a rough draft for a leading article for the *Essener* amongst Tavs' papers." "What a mess!" said Papen. "It's lucky I've made my position here secure. If the Chancellor had not listened to me, there might have been disaster here." This conversation was interrupted by a telephone call from Berlin. Papen was summoned to make a verbal report immediately. He left that day.

* * *

General von Fritsch, Commander-in-Chief of the Reich Army, paced nervously up and down his office in the War Ministry. Again he had received reliable information that the Chief of the Gestapo, Herr Himmler, was preparing a stroke against him. The General knew that for a long time his correspondence had been examined and his visitors carefully scrutinized. He now knew also that a dossier compiled by the Gestapo and headed "Fritsch and his comrades," had recently been sent to Berchtesgaden and laid before the Führer for further instructions. Further, he knew that he could reckon on Goering no longer, for this man in the Air Ministry was now one of those who most eagerly urged Hitler to action. Only recently he had begged Blomberg to let him see the Reich Foreign Minister so as to stop an action which was being planned against Austria. "We must not make Austria our enemy," he had added. "As a friend she can give us great service. I must have a year or two of peace so as to get the Army ready for action. If there's a war with either Austria or Czechoslovakia now, we shall be in the devil of a hole. That irresponsible crowd of Party big-wigs round Hitler are going to bring us to disaster one of these days. I can't help thinking that it's up to us to act. We work all right with the commercial and financial people. The Führer must be made to choose between us and his Party crowd. I can hardly wait for a favorable opportunity to beat them." The favorable

opportunity had now arrived. General Fritsch knew the discoveries made by the Austrian police in the Teinfaltstrasse. "How annoying that Blomberg happens to be away on his honeymoon," he thought. "This is our opportunity." Earlier that day he had spoken on the telephone with an influential industrialist and in carefully chosen, disguised words had given his view of the situation. This politician was pre-eminently the man to make the first advances to Hitler. But before doing this Fritsch considered that they should await publication of the Teinfaltstrasse documents by the Austrians. Hitler would receive a terrific shock and then be in the frame of mind in which to be persuaded to act against the Party.

"We must deliver our ultimatum at last," murmured Fritsch to himself. Excitedly he read the news from Vienna. Not for a moment did he doubt that the Austrian Chancellor would take this tremendous opportunity of publishing the Teinfaltstrasse documents and so show up the Third Reich to the whole world. This would raise such a storm that the *Reichswehr* and industry could come out into the open with their demands and strike against the Party. But it would have to be done quickly. The tension between the Generals and the leaders of the Party had increased to the utmost. The Gestapo Chief, Himmler, Goebbels, Hess and lately Goering too, poked about and scratched where they could, uttering their latest war-cry: "Revenge for the Teinfaltstrasse." Those fellows understood how to strike, and were not wasting time at the moment.

Among the information received by General Fritsch was an insignificant-looking paragraph reading: "The Austrian citizen, Dr. Bobek, born at Graz, was beheaded in the Moabit Prison courtyard this morning. He had been found guilty of High Treason against the Reich Government and of betrayal of military secrets. The People's Tribunal, sitting *in camera*, sentenced him to death." General von Fritsch did not know the name Bobek, but he had made inquiries and discovered that Bobek, who apparently was in contact with the Austrian Legitimists, had been charged together with former members of the "Bavarian People's Party" and their semi-military organization the

"Bavarian Watch," with conspiracy against the security of the State of National-Socialist Germany. "Who knows," said General von Fritsch to himself, "but that it will be sufficient for Himmler that I have kept up my friendly relations with the Austrian Army and have given my opinions on the situation to my Viennese colleague Jansa, in order for him to accuse me of plotting against the security of the State. Since they have been 'decapitating' their Army in Russia, there have been people here who are burning with impatience to imitate the Bolsheviks in this also. The Gestapo can't sleep on account of the fame gained by the G.P.U. Good examples should be imitated." Again he started his interrupted pacing up and down. His usually energetic features were distorted with impatience. If only Vienna would give him the opportunity of starting his action. The list of troops who were to be mobilized within the next few days was ready.

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The lonely man of Berchtesgaden again sat at his window looking towards Austria. His excitement was intense. He had just dispatched definite instructions to Vienna, that the sitting of the Reichstag called for January 30th was postponed. The idea had gone wrong. The R.H. plan would not be carried out. The whole action had to be considered again and worked out on other lines. It was now impossible to proclaim to the world that Austria was a defaulting party to the Treaty. Schuschnigg would merely reply by publishing the Teinfaltstrasse documents.

There was only one way: a leap forwards. Hess had come from Munich to Obersalzberg that day and had spoken of immediate action. But he had clung to the Party idea, saying that the Austrian Nazis should give the signal for the Legion and the Reich S.S. to march in. Hess had found the Führer in a very excited state, his eyes sparkling as they always did when he emerged from weeks of brooding, his mind made up. "The Party is no longer sufficient. After the Teinfaltstrasse episode, the Austrians are warned against any attempt from that direction. They'd be fools if they had not taken precautions. You know that I can only conquer by surprise. If everything does

not go as smoothly in Austria as we hope, if there were a civil war, then in a few days I should have the whole world about my ears. I've got to act like lightning so that the others have no time to think. The Army must be brought in." "And what about Fritsch?" Hess had replied. "He doesn't want to, and most of the Generals agree with him that the Army is not ready to be brought in yet. And the Wilhelmstrasse? Neurath must be furious about the Teinfaltstrasse discoveries. He has had a dispatch from Papen which is one long complaint of our Party friends over there. Fritsch has had an extraordinary lot to do with industrial circles lately. We can only work from inside Austria. We aren't yet homogeneous enough to play such huge stakes." "We will be homogeneous," replied Adolf Hitler. "I have thought everything out. I cannot defer action against Austria any longer. It will have to be done in a few weeks. I've told Goering and Goebbels to come here. We must talk things over and discuss what we have to do here first. This continued opposition of the Generals and the sabotage from the Wilhelmstrasse makes me sick. We shall never get on that way. Now that Schuschnigg may come out any day with your excellent plan, we have got to anticipate him. I'm going to make a clean sweep. The moment has arrived, Hess, and the leadership of the Army and also the Wilhelmstrasse must now be National-Socialist. From now on I am going to be my own War Minister. Blomberg and Fritsch must go, and Fritsch's Generals with him. I've decided to make Ribbentrop my Foreign Minister." Reich-minister Rudolf Hess whistled quietly through his teeth. "June 30th?" he asked. "It will be successful this time," said Hitler. "I don't anticipate any opposition. I've also asked Reichenau and Keitel to come here. I have got to make a few arrangements and everything will be in order. I'll find some soft job for Neurath—chairman of a council for foreign affairs, or something of that sort. No, there'll be no opposition. Himmler is seeing to that." "And what about Austria?" "Once I have the Army firmly in hand, I shall have a few words to say to this fellow Schuschnigg...."

IX

BERCHTESGADEN

CHANCELLOR SCHUSCHNIGG did not give the cue that was so longed for by Conservative circles in Germany. He had locked up the Teinfaltstrasse discoveries in his desk for future "diplomatic use." The Austrian Press received strict instructions to publish nothing in connection with the affair which might be taken as an attack on Germany or a breach of the July Treaty. Even in face of the most flagrant breach of the Treaty by the other party, Kurt von Schuschnigg was strong in his determination loyally to fulfill his part. Vienna did nothing which could have counteracted the great blow dealt by the Third Reich on the 4th February against the independent Generals, the old diplomacy of the Wilhelmstrasse and indirectly the industrialists. Adolf Hitler was enabled to carry through without disturbance the psychological and personal pre-conditions for the annexation of Austria.

Vienna was distinctly happy. There had undoubtedly been an internal crisis in National-Socialist Germany. Hitler would certainly not attempt any foreign adventure with an army which had just been robbed of its highest leaders and its best collaborators. The party deposed on the 4th February would be planning revenge, and a time of internal tension and sharp personal differences would set in for the Third Reich which would render her incapable of any outside action. Of course it could not be denied that a tremendous concentration of power had taken

place, that Hitler had now taken into his own hands the hitherto semi-independent *Reichswehr*—through the medium of tractable Generals—and that the entry of Ribbentrop into the Wilhelmstrasse opened up unlimited possibilities of an aggressive and adventurous foreign policy. But it was thought that the whole structure was too weak for immediate action.

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During the first few weeks of February Schuschnigg, frequently discussed the situation with his friend Guido Schmidt. To the victims demanded by the great changes in personnel in the Third Reich had to be added the name of Franz von Papen. He had been recalled from his post in Vienna, but the question of a successor had been left open. Papen had gone to Berlin on the 28th January. A day later the leader of the "internal pacification," State Counsellor Seyss-Inquart, of the "Ultra-National" camp, went on leave and also traveled to Berlin. Before he left he made a statement to the representative of a large American news agency, confidentially and "not for publication." The blow struck against the Committee of Seven had nothing to do with him, he had never heard of the proposition. The Government had only themselves to blame for the trouble, for now they had destroyed an important contact with the National Opposition. He was in agreement with the Chancellor on all important questions. But there was a "separatist" faction—he would mention no names—which was trying with all its might to disturb the Austro-German co-operation and which was composed of real enemies of the State. Apart from all ideology, a war with Germany was impossible for Austria. Neighboring countries would not allow it. War against Germany was a direct danger to the Rome-Berlin Axis. Neither Rome nor Belgrade could agree to Austria hindering co-operation in Central Europe. The Third Reich had not interfered with Austrian domestic politics. Hitler kept his word. But a penetration of Austria with an "All-German" mentality was required. They could not compromise on this question. It was not a question of personalities; it was unimportant whether Schuschnigg remained Chancellor or not. The only important thing was the ideal which had to be put

through, with or without Schuschnigg. Enemies to the State could not be tolerated in high positions, even in Austria. The Austrian National-Socialists were still quiet; if the pacification policy, which had so far been dealt with much too haphazardly, were not continued further, the Party would be "radicalized" and serious unrest might result.

The German Embassy Counsellor, von Stein, expressed himself in confidential circles much more strongly. Austria had an entirely incongruous view of the scope of the July Treaty. They were quite seriously under the impression at the Ballhausplatz that they were doing all that they had promised. So far as "cultural questions" were concerned, it was not sufficient that Austria had made a few quite meritorious efforts to stop the circulation of anti-German literature in the country. Negative measures were of no use. Austro-German relationship could only be regarded as truly normalized when the National-Socialist Party had freedom in Austrian organization and propaganda. National-Socialism was an internal affair for Austria, it was true, but the Party in Austria and the Party in Germany made up a whole and that had to be taken into account. Since the 11th July the Austrian Government had done practically nothing in the question of coming to an understanding with National-Socialism. The Government was certainly occupying itself with National circles, but only because it had to—in their hearts they were not in accord with the pacification agreement.

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Herr von Ketteler, Papen's secretary, was present at this conversation. When Stein had gone, he, till then a silent listener, began to speak: The amalgamation of Party and State interests was repugnant to him and his Chief. The Embassy was always being made responsible from Berlin for the failure of the pacification policy. Unfortunately Austria did not understand Herr von Papen or his mission and were doing nothing to ease his difficult task. Papen was a clever diplomat and as such could do more against the N.S.D.A.P. than people imagined. But for that purpose he must be trusted in Vienna. The Ballhausplatz had never played Papen against the Nazis, nor had given him

the opportunity of supporting his policy on an action originated by the Ballhausplatz. In the cultural question, for example, Austria had taken up a frankly weak attitude, and had refrained from using the opportunities of protests to Berlin which Herr von Papen provided. It was a shame the way Papen was misunderstood both at home and abroad. His position was so easy to understand. One had only to remember Talleyrand's words when he said of himself that he had the task of "encouraging the useful and preventing the harmful. Therefore it was the duty of everyone to serve that Government which sets out to do whatever was possible." These words were peculiarly applicable to Papen.

This was an echo of Papen's own train of thought. On the 17th January the German Ambassador had a conversation with a patriotic Austrian, during which he said: "The development of the policy of the 11th July seems unfortunately to have died away to nothing, one could almost say that there seems to be a retarding action being exerted by you. I don't know, but I have the impression that Herr von Schuschnigg has come under the influence of the opponents to the July Treaty, or has formed the opinion that no other duties emerge from the Treaty than to do nothing directly *against* Germany. It is obvious that the Ballhausplatz does not see the danger of such a policy. It has been proved that there is strong Communist propaganda at work in Austria which, in a moment of crisis, could be very dangerous for the country. So German support could be of great help, not only ideologically but practically also.

"Instead of which, I find that the rumors of danger to Austrian independence from German policy have increased to the point of a real panic. A chillingly defensive attitude is taken up by your Government from time to time. Actually Germany has fully respected Austria's delicate sensitiveness. So Austria gains no advantage from the attitude, either in the economic or the political field. I can imagine that if Austria were to enter into an active policy with the Reich, she would not only make secure her independence, which is not being threatened by Germany, but she would also gain many economic advantages and

be able to assume a much more respected position in Europe. Why, for instance, has not your Government let it be said in Berlin: 'We are prepared for a close and intimate co-operation on the condition that the Catholic Church in the Reich is recognized in her full rights?' Hitler would jump at such a request so as to have a strong argument to bring against his Radical wing to end the cultural war. Austria really must take the offensive, but in the interest of her 'all-German' mission, her historic mission, which I gladly acknowledge is also first and foremost a Catholic one. Don't build too much on differences in Europe. The relationship between Germany and the Western Powers is developing in a form which leads us to hope for the best. It would be better if you did not lose sight of your own relations with Berlin."

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All the spoken thoughts and the possibilities emerging from such conversations were reviewed by the Austrian Chancellor and his Foreign Secretary during their conferences at the beginning of February. "An all-German policy with Papen and his backers," said Guido Schmidt, "that has always been my *leitmotiv*." "After the events which have just taken place in Berlin, I don't think that Papen and his backers, as you call them, have much to say in the matter. Politics with Papen at a moment when he is being recalled? We shall have our work cut out to get him or someone like him back here and to avoid some Nazi firebrand being sent to the Embassy," replied Schuschnigg. "After having seen those Teinfaltstrasse plans there can be no doubt that a storm is brewing. Papen, whose name was on the list to be murdered, is not the man to save us." "The Party has not yet decided," said Guido Schmidt. "Perhaps it rests with us to swing the pendulum to the other side. Hitler is weak at the moment. He's got the *Reichswehr* and all the Conservatists very bitter against him. He must take care. We have the deadly Teinfaltstrasse weapon in our hands. If we use it in the correct diplomatic manner we shall at last have the means to place Hitler under an obligation. It must hang like the sword of Damocles. Above all no premature publication. If we show that we wish to

avoid conflict out of friendship for Germany, they must meet us. You yourself are of the opinion that we must gain time. The opportunity is here, and the very least we can get out of it is a strengthening of the German engagements under the July Treaty. We must see to it that Hitler refers to it in his Reichstag speech." "That would be a triumph," the Chancellor replied with a sigh. "For economic reasons alone it's urgent that we should have quiet. This continual pressure from Germany, these threats of which one never knows how much is bluff and how much is serious . . . Hitler must create external diversion from his internal crisis. Our situation practically invites him to seek that diversion with us." "Therefore it is up to us to take the lead. Believe me, with those Teinfaltstrasse documents you could go straight to Hitler and come away with a nice German peace for us."

In the middle of one of these discussions, the return of the recalled German Ambassador "on a special mission" was announced. What this mission was, was fairly frankly stated by von Stein to an Austrian at a time when the die had been cast and the development was in full swing. The conversation took place on the 11th February. Herr von Stein said: "The Reich Government is determined to ask for an unrestricted application of foreign policy according to the Treaty of the 11th July, of course within the limits of the Rome Protocols. In Berlin they have the impression that the Austrian Government is not willing to follow the spirit of this policy. If Austria does not agree with our suggestion, the Reich Government is determined to take up an appropriate attitude. On the 7th of this month Papen spoke very forcibly to Secretary of State Schmidt. Schmidt naturally contested the statement that Austria had broken her agreement. Yesterday another conversation took place between them. The Secretary of State once more asserted that Austria had done nothing wrong and that his Government was firm in its conviction of having carried out its obligations and could give no further guarantees. Guido Schmidt then added that he, at any rate, had been loyal to the Treaty. So he seems to have backed out a little. Papen thinks that the gentlemen from the Ballhaus-

platz will come to us. Their attitude is not one of complete refusal. Papen has thought of a *modus procedendi*, namely a reformation of the Government. Schmidt alone would be the responsible leader of foreign policy. With him there would be a second Austrian Minister as a guarantor of the 11th July. Outwardly, of course, the impression would be given that the Chancellor had arranged this himself freely and not under 'foreign,' that is, German, or public pressure. Perhaps the re-formation of the Government could be quite harmlessly attributed to the resignation of Vice-Chancellor Hülgerth through ill-health.

"Herr von Papen went to Berchtesgaden to give his impressions and ideas. If the change, or rather, the visible guarantee of the Treaty in the sense on which we should insist, does not take place, then the post of Ambassador in Vienna will not be filled and the Austrian National-Socialists will have a free hand."

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It is not known how much the Austrian Chancellor knew of Guido Schmidt's statements to von Papen, but the latter felt justified in telling Hitler that he had the impression that the Austrian Government was prepared to agree to the German interpretation of the July Treaty, to bring their foreign policy into line and, by reforming the Cabinet in an "all-German" sense, to change their present attitude. One thing is certain: there was a connection between the various journeys made by Papen between Vienna and Berchtesgaden, the two visits of Seyss-Inquart to Berlin and the talks between Schmidt and Papen. At the beginning of February, Guido Schmidt's intimate colleague, Counsellor Wolf, was in Berlin also and had some very important interviews which had immediate results on the contents of the Berchtesgaden ultimatum.

Whatever the facts may be, Schuschnigg had not the slightest idea that he was to receive a German ultimatum when after a certain amount of hesitation he accepted the pressing invitation brought by Papen to a personal meeting with Hitler. He did not expect a destructive list of demands in the preparation of which

Seyss-Inquart and Wolf and, at least indirectly, Guido Schmidt had collaborated from the Austrian side. Even after Berchtesgaden, Schuschnigg would not believe that his Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had had anything to do with the "plot." He had allowed himself to be persuaded by Guido Schmidt and Papen to make no use of the Teinfaltstrasse documents which could in any way upset Germany. But he thought that by means of these documents he would be able to bring off one of those masterpieces of strategy such as he had often been lucky enough to arrange in his home politics. "Only patience and *noblesse* can lead to the goal," he had repeatedly answered to the anxious warnings of his patriotic friends during the last few months. "I know every detail and am convinced that the others will not be the victors. But the whole international situation, and especially Austro-German relations, is comparable with a valuable china figure. Imagine that I have this figure before me on my desk and rough, clumsy hands are groping for it. I could ward off the attack by hitting out sharply. I would then beat off the rough hands but in so doing I should destroy the figure, and for ever." Even the Teinfaltstrasse discoveries could not move him from this point of view. He was determined to stop Germany by a policy of delicate, tactical moves and by light, almost unnoticeable, gestures.

Papen and Schmidt had persuaded him to go to the meeting at Berchtesgaden by representing that this was the last, but also an excellent, opportunity. Hitler had got it into his head that in his speech to the Reichstag, which had now been postponed till the 20th February, he would have to refer to relations between Germany and Austria. The Teinfaltstrasse affair and Papen's recall from the Embassy made a new foundation for these relations all the more necessary. Were Austria to refuse to treat, and to treat in the most direct way, that of a personal meeting between the two Heads of the Governments, then it would come to a fight. A free hand for Austrian Nazis, the commencement of a campaign of terror, a *putsch*, civil war and a German invasion, would be the inevitable result. But this situation was not unavoidable. On account of the internal trouble

with the *Reichswehr*, Hitler was weakened. The discreet way in which the Austrian Government had handled the Teinfaltstrasse documents had already placed him in their debt. So he would most certainly be reasonable.

These arguments had been very clear to the Austrian Chancellor. It was his aim to avoid a political break with Germany, and to make a new start. It would be a real triumph if his journey to Berchtesgaden could be rewarded by successfully persuading Hitler to speak of Austria's independence in his Reichstag speech and at last personally to recognize the Treaty. So far it had only been recognized by the Wilhelmstrasse, that is to say Germany's diplomatic representatives in Vienna, and on the historic night of July 11th, 1936, it had been announced to the German people by Goebbels and not by Hitler himself. Truly the alternative seemed to be a return to the latent state of war of 1933-1935, and perhaps worse. Schuschnigg wanted peace at any price. He wished to avoid an era of practically civil war conditions, particularly in view of the international situation, which gave Austria no guarantee of safety. These conditions should be avoided even at the price of further concessions. And finally the Teinfaltstrasse documents were of some value. Should Hitler come out with stupid demands or with complaints of Austria's lack of loyalty to the Treaty or any of those tales that Papen and the "Ultra-Nationals" kept harping on, then he would merely draw the R.H. plan from his pocket and ask Hitler what he thought of that as a proof of Germany's loyalty to the Treaty. Schuschnigg in his somewhat romantic picture of the Führer's Germanic ideology, never imagined that the R.H. plan might be part of Hitler's program also. The Austrian Chancellor was suspicious of his partner in the Treaty and he also thought that he had to keep his eyes open with respect to his colleagues. But his disappointments from both directions were far above anything he may have imagined or which he thought possible even from National-Socialist "Strategy." One of his closest colleagues, Colonel Adam, when recently approached by a Swiss journalist who felt it his duty to warn him against National-Socialist provocation, had replied with the

naïve question: "Is there no German honesty?" Schuschnigg, who thought himself anything but naïve, was not far wrong, at least so far as Hitler personally was concerned, in not trusting too much to other people's loyalty. As always in matters concerning Germany, he sent for his monitor, Ernst Karl Winter, now no longer Vice-Burgomaster of Vienna, for he had fallen from grace owing to his opposition to the policy of the July Treaty and was now reduced to a political hanger-on without any influence whatever. Without mentioning the invitation he had received from Hitler, Schuschnigg, in a conversation—apparently theoretical—lasting many hours, had asked Dr. Winter whether he considered Hitler to be a man one could treat with and one with whom an agreement could be concluded. Winter's view was that the totalitarian character of National-Socialism and its new ethics cut out any possibility of agreement. Anyone who enters on an agreement with such people in the traditional and even Christian conception of international right and treaty morals, will be a fool. They have only one aim: absolute, undivided power over everything in life, and they have only one commandment: "All that benefits the German people, represented in me, is right." Schuschnigg persisted in the view that under certain conditions even the Third Reich and its Führer might be possible partners to a treaty. He was thinking of the Italian guarantee, which was still not entirely worthless, and of the trump card in his pocket—the R.H. plan.

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The brilliant ball of the Patriotic Front took place on February 10th in the Hofburg at Vienna. On this evening Schuschnigg's expression was serious even for him, but actually he was neither so depressed nor anxious as he had seemed to be for the last few months. He talked for long periods with the diplomats present, particularly with those of the Western Powers, and at last informed them almost casually that his Secretary of State Guido Schmidt would have an important communication to make to them the next morning. This communication, namely that the Chancellor would leave on the 12th February to visit the Führer at Berchtesgaden, was given out to a meeting of Ambassadors

as though it were really of little importance. "The discussion will be to clear up misunderstandings which have lately arisen over the operation of the July Treaty and the internal pacification policy. The Envoy, Herr von Papen, has given a very reassuring explanation. The Austrian Government has not the slightest need to have any anxiety. The meeting is taking place on condition that the sovereignty and independence of the Austrian State, recognized by Germany in the July Treaty, will not come up for discussion."

The high officials of the Ballhausplatz and of the Austrian Press Service who were received by the Chancellor on the morning of the 12th February before he left on his journey, found him almost gay, and very sure of himself. He went off to Berchtesgaden as though marching to certain victory. He was determined not to be influenced by the Führer's eloquence or by veiled threats into giving any concessions which went beyond the July Treaty. His assurance was shared by his entourage, all the officials and through them the foreign diplomats and Press representatives. The completely uninformative communiqué issued to the Press on the evening of that historic day, in which only the fact that a meeting had taken place was announced, could only strengthen the impression that nothing new was to be expected and that the Chancellor had not made any concessions. The Sunday papers of Vienna and Berlin proved very discreet and obviously uninformed. The English and French papers even spoke of a "victory" for Schuschnigg. The Austrian Embassies abroad had been instructed to prevent any exaggerated importance being placed on this meeting, and to speak of it as the normal outcome of the July Treaty.

So on that Sunday, Vienna and the other capitals were in a very expectant mood but by no means disturbed. Only the long delay in giving official information of the gist of the conversation instilled a certain nervousness. Not till late on Sunday evening did the truth begin to filter through. The few people seen by the Chancellor since his return seemed extremely dismayed. They felt as though they had seen a Medusa head—that was what the chief of the Austrian Government looked like—

absolutely petrified in his deep grief, his feeling of injured human dignity, of impotent rage and hopeless, despairing turning-over of the situation that had now come about. After his return to Vienna, Schuschnigg had locked himself up in his house; he would see no one, not even his closest friends. Secretary of State Guido Schmidt also had a very depressed look and had also vanished from the picture. On Sunday afternoon, Schuschnigg visited President Miklas. The two men responsible for Austria's future were closeted together for several hours, and thereafter maintained strict silence on the course their conversation had taken. Early on Monday morning an endless string of meetings took place between the Chancellor and his colleagues, with Burgomaster Schmitz, again with the President, with Reither, leader of the Agrarian Party, with high officials of the Ballhausplatz and with the Italian Ambassador.

Then like wildfire the news flashed through Vienna, through Austria, throughout the world: Schuschnigg had brought back a German ultimatum; the conversation with Hitler had been most stormy and had gone beyond all diplomatic usage. And at the same time came the news that the German Army was deploying on the Austro-Bavarian frontier.

On Monday morning Secretary of State Guido Schmidt asked the Ambassadors of Great Britain and France to visit him and gave them information regarding the German demands. He was obviously endeavoring to make the best of things. They were certainly serious, even disturbing, but at the moment there was no need to fear the worst. The principle of the July Treaty, the recognition by the German Reich of Austria's independence, was saved at any rate. Certain concessions in the interests of internal pacification would have to be made which would of necessity bring about a reorganization of the Cabinet. From the statement made it was not clear whether a German ultimatum had been presented or not. But the little they were told was sufficient for the foreign diplomats to imagine how the Chancellor of the Sovereign State of Austria had been received and treated.

In view of the numerous and mostly fictitious accounts of the Berchtesgaden meeting which have been spread abroad, it should

be emphasized that the following account is from the Chancellor himself and from persons to whom he gave a detailed description.

At first Hitler had his Austrian "guest" shown alone into his study, where he received him in a very excited and ungracious manner. Guido Schmidt and the Chancellor's personal adjutant were made to wait in the anteroom with von Ribbentrop and some of Hitler's personal suite, including Generals Keitel, Reichenau and Sperrle. Schuschnigg's impression was that it was the Führer's excitement and not discourtesy which caused him to fail to offer a seat. For a long time Hitler did not allow his visitor to speak but himself poured forth a flood of complaints, accusations and protests. If it had been left to him personally and to the dictates of his feelings he would never have arranged this meeting, he stressed. He could not have any friendly feelings, any respect or any trust for those men who were at that time representing before the world the country of his birth, Austria. Personally he was and would remain an enemy of the system ruling in Austria, the Austrian Legitimism and the Austrianism conspiring with the enemies of the German people. His partisans, the German men and women in Austria who believed in him and had set their hopes on him, had been caused a great deal of suffering by this system. Nevertheless he would make another attempt to come to a peaceful accord. But he wished to emphasize that this would be the last attempt. Therefore he was prepared to ignore his personal feelings and convictions and to place the operation of the July Treaty on a correct basis, and even to withdraw all support from the Austrian National-Socialists, if a few German demands for loyal co-operation on the basis of the Treaty were fulfilled. If the Austrian Government refused these demands, he would be compelled to proceed against the Austrian system and annihilate it. As Schuschnigg was about to protest at this point against his extraordinary reception, Hitler's first furious outburst took place. With rolling eyes he repeated several times the word *vernichten* (annihilate) and then commenced personal invective against his guest. "You just wait, you will be crushed," he

screamed. Then he went into a historical and philosophical exposition of the mission entrusted to him on behalf of the German people. "I must found an empire of eighty million souls," he roared. Threats followed of what would happen if Austria refused to take the hand outstretched in the cause of peace. The German Army was ready to restore order, German aeroplanes could be over Vienna in a few hours, the Austrian National-Socialists were only awaiting the word from him that would release them from their previous inaction freely accepted by them through the Treaty, and then they would pass over to action on their part. "They will be perfectly equipped for that." As Hitler must have seen the Chancellor's blank astonishment and anger, there followed a fresh outburst. "Do you not realize that you are in the presence of the greatest German ever known to history!" he hurled at the amazed Chancellor. Then he went into a long detailed statement of the power at his disposal. He repeatedly broke off to call in one or other of the Generals waiting in the anteroom who, to obviously prearranged questions, had to reply that this or the other body of troops was ready for action. There was repeated talk of two iron-clad divisions whose equipment with the heaviest weapons of offense was continually discussed before Schuschnigg. Finally the Supreme Chief of the German Army was called in to confirm once again what the other Generals and Hitler himself had said about the preparedness of the German Army. Schuschnigg was given leave to withdraw and think over the Führer's demands. One of Hitler's adjutants handed the Chancellor a written list of them. Hitler remained for some time in conversation with General Keitel. Meanwhile there was a very depressed atmosphere in the anteroom. When Hitler was heard yelling and a few sentences could be understood from his tirade, the impression was that he had been attacked by a paroxysm of insanity. "This rarely happens," said one of the German adjutants, apologetically. Guido Schmidt put on his most ironic expression. Ribbentrop flushed to the roots of his hair. When General von Keitel finally returned to the anteroom, he stood before von Ribbentrop and in a loud voice discussed with him the steps to be taken in case of war.

Then Guido Schmidt was asked to go in to see Schuschnigg, who with a sad face handed to him the long list of German demands. Both went hurriedly into the question of Austrian counter-proposals. Again Hitler asked the Austrian Chancellor to come to him, and immediately stated that the Chancellor must make up his mind at once or else "other steps" would be taken within a few hours. Hitler warned the Head of the Austrian Government not to reckon on outside assistance, which gave him the opportunity of giving his detailed views on the political situation in the world. He spoke very deprecatingly of the Western Powers. So far as England was concerned, since the war, the British Empire had received one slap in the face after another. England was a colossus with feet of clay. One more defeat and she would break up. France did not enter into the question any more. At the most, all she had left was a certain defensive strength. But she had ceased to carry any weight as a Power on account of her constant internal unrest and decomposition. As the Austrian Chancellor attempted to speak again, Hitler went on quickly: "I know. You're thinking of Mussolini. I am filled with admiration for him and his work and I stand for a far-reaching, firmly based solidarity between Fascism and National-Socialism. But the military efficiency of the Italians is quite another question. Don't be under any illusions in that respect. If Mussolini wants to help you, which incidentally he certainly will not, then 100,000 German troops will be sufficient not only to push Italy back from the Brenner but to chase the Italian Army as far as Naples."¹

¹ On the instructions of his Government, the Austrian Military Attaché in Rome reported this remark by Hitler to Mussolini at the end of February or the beginning of March. At first the Duce listened in silence, then he paced up and down the study in the Palazzo Venezia with long quick strides. He returned to his desk, and, emphasizing each sentence by banging his fist on the table, said in broken German: "I tell you that the best Army in Europe at the moment is not the German. The best army in Europe is not even the Italian. I tell you that the best army in Europe is and remains . . . the French Army."

A German officer told Schuschnigg's personal adjutant when during the Berchtesgaden interview Hitler was heard yelling: "He often has attacks like this and then will not tolerate any contradiction whatsoever. For

After Hitler had announced his ultimatum to Schuschnigg, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop and the Austrian Secretary of State Schmidt were called in. Long wearying discussions began during which Hitler plainly showed his lack of interest in details. Finally a program embodying the following points was drawn up:—

Austria concedes:—

- (1) A general amnesty for Austrian National-Socialists.
- (2) The admission of State Councilor Seyss-Inquart into the Government as Minister of Public Security.
- (3) The suspension of the measures for the stoppage or reduction of salaries or pensions to which certain Austrian National-Socialists had been subjected.
- (4) The immediate or very early pensioning off of the Austrian Chief of Staff, General Jansa.
- (5) The appointment of Ministerial Councilor Wolf to an important post (Deputy Federal Commissioner) in the Austrian Press Service.¹
- (6) The collaboration of the Austrian National-Socialists in the Patriotic Front so far as they were prepared to declare their adherence to the principles of the Front.

The German "compensation" for these concessions were to consist in a renewed recognition of the principles of the July Treaty, the breaking off of all relations with the illegal National-Socialist organizations, and the transfer to the Reich of Captain Leopold and Dr. Tavs.

The Austrians had to be particularly obstinate to get the demand for the retirement of the Secretary of State in the Min-

instance, for months he has refused to see the German Military Attaché in Paris, General Kühlenthal, because he once warned the Führer against under-estimating the power and reliability of the French Army, and more particularly because he said that Communism had hardly penetrated the French Army at all."

¹ Schuschnigg was amazed at this demand. It was a proof of the part played by Wolf as "negotiator" in Berlin, which on the 11th March was to bring him the post of Foreign Minister over the head of his protector, Guido Schmidt.

istry of Defense, General Zehner, withdrawn from the program. The discussion of details was interrupted by a luncheon given by Hitler to those attending the conference. It was very short and plain, obviously designed to impress the Austrians with the frugality of the Führer's table. In any case the Führer did not fail to take the opportunity of drawing attention to the simplicity surrounding the Chancellor of the German Reich.

The final battle was over the period of the ultimatum. Schuschnigg declared that he could only express himself personally as prepared to promise to recommend the program for acceptance, but it was not he, but the President Miklas who, after consulting the constitutional authorities, had the last word. Eventually Hitler, who was once more paying full attention to the discussion now that this point had cropped up, gave till six o'clock in the evening of the 15th February for acceptance of the German demands contained in the ultimatum.

The departure of the Austrian guests took place in a very "frosty" atmosphere. The handshake between the Führer and the Austrian Chancellor was extremely fleeting. Guido Schmidt found Schuschnigg a very silent traveling companion. The Chancellor had all he could do to repress his gnawing rage and to prevent a nervous outburst.

* * *

He pulled himself together at a dinner given on Monday evening to the Diplomatic Corps, but he was obviously unhappy and gloomy. He took the Ambassadors of Britain, France and Italy to one side and in a few words gave them a summary of the Berchtesgaden conversation, but out of pure shame he could not bring himself to speak of the shocking humiliation to which he had been subjected. He could not refrain, however, from telling one diplomat present, and he spoke bitterly, that never before in the twentieth century and probably never even in earlier times had the Head of the Government of a Sovereign State had to listen to such astonishing utterances. Unlike Guido Schmidt, he openly confessed that it was an ultimatum he had received and that Hitler had warned him not to rely on any foreign Power. He also made it quite clear that in his view he

had once again succeeded in avoiding irreparable calamities, but that Austria could not by herself withstand a second such shock.

The conversations were continued in Vienna on the Tuesday morning. It was learned that both the President and the Federal Chancellor had stated their intention to resign. At noon on Tuesday the French Ambassador called at the Ballhausplatz to express on behalf of his Government the interest taken by the Republic in the maintenance of Austria's independence, and asked if there was anything France could do to lighten Austria's burden. On Schuschnigg's instructions, Hornbostel replied that the Austrian Government was most grateful for the friendly interest shown by France but could not make use of it since the Reich Government had stipulated a reply by six o'clock on Tuesday evening and this could not be postponed.

That same evening the German ultimatum was accepted and during the next few days steps were taken by the Austrian Government to fulfill the conditions stipulated by the Third Reich. Schuschnigg had not concealed from the Ambassadors of the foreign countries that a refusal of the ultimatum would lead to the Austrian National-Socialists being "let loose," and that in the event of an armed repression of their movement, the Reich Army was standing on the other side of the frontier ready to come to the protection of their oppressed compatriots. Yet one of the first official acts undertaken by the new Foreign Minister Guido Schmidt was to instruct the Austrian Ambassadors in foreign countries to be discreet and to reassure the Powers as much as possible. It is known that the resulting visit of the Austrian Ambassador in London, Baron Franckenstein, to the Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain, enabled the latter to answer a question in the House of Commons that Austria herself denied having received an ultimatum and regarded the "agreement" of Berchtesgaden as an understanding entered into freely by the two German States.

* * *

Would Schuschnigg and the Austrian politicians who advised him still have decided to accept the ultimatum had they known that a few days before the Berchtesgaden meeting a very serious

conversation had taken place between Hitler and the supreme head of the Army, General von Keitel, in which the latter had been asked as to the preparedness of the Army for an expedition against Austria? "*Mein Führer*," the General had replied, "if you require the army to add military support to a bluff, we await your orders. But we are not yet ready for serious action, and so I could not place the Army at your disposal for war in its present condition."

German movements of troops certainly took place on the day of the Berchtesgaden meeting and immediately afterwards. But today it can be said with a certain amount of assurance that they were only a maneuver to serve as a military bluff and that serious preparations for invasion were not taken on the 12th February and the following days—in contrast to the 11th March. On the other hand a refusal of the ultimatum would have been the signal for the start of a National-Socialist terror campaign in Austria. That is to say, a serious test of nerves with uncertain consequences, which Schuschnigg and his colleagues did not feel justified in risking.

Mussolini's refusal to intervene with Berlin in favor of Austria, which had already been communicated, must have had decisive significance. And it must also be borne in mind that apart from the weak and belated French offer to the Ballhausplatz, no other Power had raised a finger. The Austrian Chancellor was therefore proved right, and his pessimism confirmed; Austria found herself alone at a dress rehearsal of a catastrophe. All now depended on whether there was any possibility of meeting the second blow which would certainly be dealt by Germany.

X

EUROPE IS SILENT

AFTER THE ACCEPTANCE of the Berchtesgaden ultimatum, and the news that soon came, from Austria as well as Germany, of the elation among the National-Socialists, there was only one question in all the European Cabinets: When will the penetration of Austria, now being carried out so swiftly and so thoroughly, have reached a point where Hitler can strike his next blow, either by a plebiscite or a National-Socialist *putsch* backed up by the *Reichswehr*, so as to put through the complete "Nazi-fication" of Austria?

Once again the reaction of the principal Powers was not unanimous. During the last week of February, Vienna received what sounded like very definite encouragement from Italy. Mussolini had the impression that his inaction had had the desired effect on the Western Powers and that he had brought England to a state of preparedness to treat. But it was just that event which cleared a path for his immediate negotiation, namely the fall of Mr. Eden, which was to bring new and difficult trials for Austria. It brought to nothing the protective action which had already been prepared and which would at least have gained time, and it gave Hitler the assurance that he need fear no action from Mr. Chamberlain's England against fresh pressure being put on Austria.

In French Government circles, the Berchtesgaden conversation caused great anxiety on account of Czechoslovakia. The

obstacle hitherto provided by Austria to the formation of an anti-Czechoslovak front in Central Europe was now as good as removed. The hopes of a coalition of Danubian States, based at first on the triangle Vienna-Prague-Budapest, were now dashed to the ground. It was clear that Schuschnigg could no longer dare to continue his policy with Czechoslovakia, one on which, by the way, Paris placed exaggerated importance.

For all these reasons the tendency gained ground in the French capital which was for a more active foreign policy, and which reproached the Quai d'Orsay for its halting attitude of trailing behind events. The idea began to spread that France was firmly decided not to let her ally Czechoslovakia fall, and that it would be a good thing to make a stand now for Austria and stop a second ultimatum which would put Czechoslovakia in a more than dangerous situation and, above all, completely isolate her. So long as independent Austria was there, the defense of Czechoslovakia was much easier than it would be after the fall of Austria, which might be expected if no one stepped in.

The hypothesis was that Austria's will for self-determination was not broken, and that in the country itself there was sufficient power of resistance to stand up against a complete National-Socialist penetration. Immediately after Berchtesgaden, important conferences took place where views were expressed by such eminent politicians as Edouard Herriot, Paul Reynaud, George Mandel, Louis Marin and Anatole de Monzie. Their anxiety was chiefly based on the obvious joint game played by Germany and Italy. If Italy put up with the Berchtesgaden ultimatum which would make Austria a vassal State of the Third Reich (although action on Austria's behalf would have made an understanding between Italy and the Western Powers possible), then it looked very much as though Germany had offered Italy some compensation which was greater than the advantages to be gained from the Powers (recognition of the Abyssinian Empire and a British loan). But such compensation could only be at the cost of France (Tunis) or England (Egypt). The policy of pro-German circles in England, and the hopes too of a few

French politicians, that by sacrificing Central Europe the French and British Colonies could be safeguarded, appeared very illusory in the light of such considerations. The view obstinately held in London, that the Rome-Berlin Axis must break over Austria, was proved by events to be wrong. France and England could not have served their own interests better than by preventing the annexation of Austria by Germany.

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There were many important forces of resistance in Austria which a clever domestic policy could have considerably broadened, especially the Legitimists, the working classes organized in the Trade Unions and the Social Workers' Union (which were attracting ever increasing numbers of the hitherto illegal Socialists owing to the threat of a common enemy), a large section of the Catholics, etc. But all these groups required greater freedom if they were to develop their defense work, and provision had also to be made against a second German ultimatum taking away their freedom under the pretext that it was necessary to prevent the formation of a People's Front regime in Austria. The need for energetic action in Berlin by the Western Powers became more and more obvious. Also proofs were appearing that the military pressure, which Hitler talked so much about at Berchtesgaden, was sheer bluff. The secret service of one of the Powers had these proofs in its hands. This enabled the Ambassador of this Power in Vienna to minimize the danger and to give reassurance to his own country as well as to the Austrian Government. Even from German circles which sympathized more with the German Generals than with the Nazi regime, information was forthcoming regarding this military demonstration which was only designed as bluff. Germany was not ready for war. If therefore the German bluff were called, there was no need to fear that war against which a French politician of such standing as M. Flandin felt it his duty to express a warning.

In conversations which patriotic Austrians had with English and French friends such points were frequently discussed even before Berchtesgaden. In the activist circles of France, general

regret was now expressed that the Austrian Chancellor, with whose difficult position everyone sympathized, had given way to the German ultimatum and had not answered it by an appeal to the Stresa Powers, the League of Nations and world publicity. Such action would have made it considerably easier for England and France to mobilize public opinion. Everything now depended on Austria not giving in without a fight on the next occasion, if there were one, and her taking the risk of saying No and resisting with her own strength. If the worst came to the worst a transitory defeat with honor saved was in any case preferable to a dishonorable capitulation, which also would lead to defeat.

In England and France groups appeared desiring co-operation with the forces ready for and capable of resistance in Austria, whose sympathies were divided, according to their political views, with Legitimism or the workers' movements. But on one point they were agreed, that only a coalition of these forces in Austria would give a sufficiently broad front for resistance. So far as France was concerned, it became obvious during these days that sympathy for Austria extended from the extreme Left to the extreme Right, that is to say a national united front, which was by no means the case on Czechoslovakia. The psychological pre-conditions for a protective action on Austria's behalf were therefore fully present.

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The possibilities which thus began to develop were seriously damaged by the dispatch sent on Guido Schmidt's instructions to Austrian Ambassadors, in which the fact of the German ultimatum was denied. The fact that the Austrian Chancellor had told the British Government in a direct way that he could not stand up to a second ultimatum, and that the position in that case would be hopeless, could not counter the effect of the trump which the new Austrian Foreign Minister had dealt to the opponents of intervention in Austria. In a conversation with Baron Franckenstein, the Austrian Ambassador in London, Sir Robert Vansittart had said that any energetic reaction to Berchtesgaden by Great Britain was not very probable in view of the overwhelming weight of public opinion. Any British

action, therefore, arising from the Franco-British inquiries in Berlin (seeking enlightenment on Berchtesgaden; demonstration of the Western Powers' permanent interest in Central Europe) was made more difficult by the Austrian Chancellor's yielding and by the publication of the common Austro-German communiqué on the results of the Berchtesgaden meeting, giving the Reich Government the excuse to say that there was complete concord in Austrian and German political ideas. But Sir Robert said finally that Britain might even yet take active steps if France took the initiative. The Quai d'Orsay must stop turning nervously and anxiously to the Foreign Office on every occasion and asking for advice instead of making up its own mind and energetically putting forward its own view to London.

The pressure of public opinion and of parliamentary circles in France, together with the information from London, in fact resulted in the French Government making the suggestion to the British on the 18th February that together they should undertake a very energetic *démarche* in Berlin, which should be directed towards the following points:—

- (1) France and Great Britain declare anew and formally, citing the appropriate Treaty texts, the vital importance of Austria's complete independence for the peace and balance of power of Europe;
- (2) France and Great Britain reserve the right to examine whether, by the Berchtesgaden agreement, Austria has not already surrendered her independence in fact;
- (3) Any further act of force by Germany which puts in question the Central European *status quo* will meet with energetic resistance by the Western Powers.

The British Foreign Office received this proposal from France very favorably and the Paris Press was able to announce that a *démarche* would be undertaken in Berlin. Details of the Berchtesgaden meeting, which had meanwhile come to the knowledge of the European Cabinets, caused amazement everywhere and strengthened the conviction that Hitler must be stopped on the path he had taken before it was too late and war

became unavoidable. The British Foreign Minister, Mr. Eden, in particular, was convinced that only immediate action could exorcise the war menace in Europe. He came up against the opposite conception held by the Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain, for whom Austria and Central Europe were still only a function of Anglo-Italian relations. In the conflict between the two statesmen Mr. Eden's readiness to agree to the French proposal and to undertake the *démarche* in Berlin was the real cause of his fall. Mr. Chamberlain was prepared to postpone the opening of conversations with Italy, which Mr. Eden thought premature, for two or three months. But in no circumstances would he agree to the *démarche* on Austria which Mr. Eden declared he could not renounce. So the break came which it is true for the time being sealed the fate of Austria, but which for the future gave the young Conservative forces represented by Eden the possibility of making themselves the crystallization point of a new national grouping in Britain.

When Hitler in his Reichstag speech of the 20th February ranted in strong and disrespectful terms against Mr. Eden personally, he had previously been informed that he could do so without any fear for Anglo-German relations, as the British Foreign Minister's days were numbered. But the Britishers who shared their Premier's view that the opening of Anglo-Italian negotiations would automatically re-establish Mussolini's guarantee for Austria's independence, were soon to see that they had been mistaken.

After Eden's fall the Quai d'Orsay still persisted in their proposal, but met with a refusal from his successor, Lord Halifax. Now the Foreign Office declared that they could see no possibility and no ground for intervention. The Berchtesgaden agreement had been entered into voluntarily, and the Austrian Government, moreover, had not asked for the assistance of the Western Powers. The Franco-British-Italian declarations for the protection of Austria's independence (made in February and September 1934) had become practically inoperative owing to Italy having left the combination of Powers. Even an official inquiry from the French Government whether England had in-

cluded or intended to include the Austrian question in her talks with Italy, was answered in the negative. Austria was not part of the Anglo-Italian complex of questions.

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The disillusionments prepared by London caused, it is true, the responsible men in Paris to drop their efforts on Austria's behalf—the French Prime Minister, Monsieur Chautemps, was personally informed by the British Ambassador, Sir Eric Phipps, after Mr. Eden's resignation, of the change in the attitude of the Foreign Office. But public opinion was awakened and the most influential French parliamentarians did not allow their view of the situation to be altered. The speech made by the Austrian Chancellor on February 24th galvanized Austria's forces of resistance, and also made a lasting impression on other countries. It was regarded everywhere as an expression of an unshakable will to defend Austria. Men like Herriot confessed that they were moved to tears by this speech.

An important debate on foreign affairs took place in the French Chamber of Deputies on the 25th and 26th of February, which actually turned into a debate on Austria. It indicated Flandin's complete isolation, and the speeches made by Deputies Pezet, de Monzie, Oberkirch, Grumbach, Péri, Ybornegaray, Mistler and Reynaud—that is to say, a cross-section of all parties of the Chamber—showed an attitude which only needed concretization in Government acts for it to lead to action by France on behalf of Austria's independence. Even the Foreign Minister, Monsieur Delbos, and the Prime Minister, Monsieur Chautemps, stressed the interest still shown by France in Austria's independence and sovereignty. The effect of this debate on Hitler's special reporter has already been mentioned. The tone of the debate in the Chamber and its echo in the Press gave patriotic Austrians, who through their contact with French friends had done all they could to enlighten public opinion in France, the feeling that things were going well.

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In the course of the next few days support for their action came from a source which was bound to be listened to in Paris.

On the 1st March there arrived in the French capital a special envoy from the Czechoslovak President, Herr Benes, bringing a dispatch to the Prime Minister, Chautemps, and the former Prime Minister, Léon Blum. This dispatch bluntly stated: If France does not do her utmost to save Austria, with whom in the present situation Czechoslovakia feels her own fate bound, Prague will lose faith in France as an ally. A position might then easily arise where Czechoslovakia would be forced to commence negotiations with Berlin. A great impression was caused by this dispatch. It led to another immediate démarche by Paris in London. The position had become so serious that it demanded the greatest vigilance and readiness to act at once in case of need. It was therefore urgently necessary that permanent contact be established between London and Paris, also a general discussion between both countries should not be delayed any longer. After Austria it would be Czechoslovakia's turn. If this were so, France would unquestionably have to fulfill her alliance obligations and so be caught up in a war. The British Government must know perfectly well that sooner or later Great Britain would have to come in also. Therefore it was necessary that they should join immediately in some preventive action. Nothing could increase the danger of war so much as inaction. It was now quite impossible just to await developments with folded arms.

The Prague envoy had spent some time in Vienna on his way through and had gained a very divided impression. He told of a rumor that President Miklas had wanted to resign after the Berchtesgaden ultimatum, and that great depression reigned in Government circles and also with the patriotic portion of the population. On the other hand amongst the Trade Unions, the Legitimists and some individuals of the old Christian-Social camp he had met a decided desire for resistance. He had the impression that since the speech of the 24th February, opposition was concentrated round the person of the Chancellor. A refusal by the Chancellor to act could therefore have disastrous results. The further impression to be got from his statements

was that leading circles in Czechoslovakia were gradually beginning to consider the idea of a Restoration.

The special envoy had consecutive conversations with the Foreign Minister, Monsieur Delbos, the General Secretary at the Quai d'Orsay, Monsieur Leger, and the former Prime Minister and leader of the strongest Government party, Monsieur Léon Blum. As he told his Ambassador, he found these three men unanimous in their assertion that whatever happened Czechoslovakia would not be deserted by France. Delbos shook his head in a worried manner: "I cannot understand how President Benes got the idea that France was not taking her obligations to Czechoslovakia seriously and that she wouldn't stand by her in case of need. I would remind you of my statement at the Radical-Socialist celebrations at Lille, and of the assurance which I had the honor to give personally to your President, Prime Minister Hodza, and my colleague Krofta during my visit to Prague. I would remind you further of the statements made by the Prime Minister and myself a few days ago from the Tribune of the Chamber. Don't be led away by occasional defeatist attitudes in certain papers. There is nothing in the world, even the most absurd standpoint, that won't find a spokesman now and then in the French Press. Even clever people sometimes enjoy wild flights of fancy and make statements which basically they themselves don't believe. You know us Frenchmen. We are individualists in the extreme. Our journalists and our politicians too, when off duty, find an irresistible attraction in making certain statements right out of the blue just because they go dead against *communis opinio* and rooted conviction. Please tell your revered President that he must not let himself be deceived. London knows very well that any attack on Czechoslovakia is for us a *casus foederis*, even though it be started by the internal unrest of the Sudeten Germans. Your close linking up of the Czechoslovak and Austrian questions does not therefore seem to be well founded. We have no alliance with Austria. We have no possibility of influencing the development of your neighbor's domestic policy. If the Nazis come into power in Vienna legally, our hands are tied.

"I must be very plain-spoken so that no false impression may be given. I see no chance of a preventive action on Austria's behalf. If it were to come from us alone, Berlin would probably get the idea that England had left us in the lurch and so we were isolated. That would be a direct invitation to the Third Reich to fall on Austria. We have really done all we can. We proposed to England with the most earnest representations that we should make a joint *démarche* in Berlin. Eden wanted to, but Chamberlain and Halifax gave us a very definite refusal. It was not only yesterday that I thought things looked black for Austria. Diplomatically, we shall also be at our posts. But I can't threaten war, which we don't want, on account of Austria."

"But don't you think," asked the Prague envoy, "that Hitler is constantly threatening war, which he doesn't want and couldn't wage, and that is precisely why he is having success with his foreign policy?" "I know the tactics of the Dictator States perfectly," replied Delbos a little sharply, "but as the responsible Foreign Minister to the French Republic I emphatically refuse to take refuge in those types of frivolous and unreal methods. They cannot lead to any good in the long run. It's the same with propaganda. I'm being told all the time that France is not making enough propaganda, whilst German and Italian propaganda is penetrating everywhere, even here. Nevertheless we definitely refuse to enter into competition with the Dictator States in this field. For our propaganda the principle of the thrifty father of a family applies, who balances his income and his expenditure. Germany and Italy are like those *Grand Seigneurs* of the *Ancien Régime* who always lived beyond their means and finally could only carry on their spending by borrowing which must end in ruination for them. Seriously, I'm convinced that the Third Reich will be ruined by its crazy propaganda." "Or reach a position which will allow it to leave others to pay its debts," replied his guest, who left the Quai d'Orsay in a fairly depressed frame of mind.

His impressions of his conversation with the General Secretary of the French Foreign Office were certainly a little more positive. Monsieur Leger displayed a complete understanding

of the importance of the Austrian position also for the safety of Czechoslovakia. He, too, repeated his Chief's assurance that France would never desert Czechoslovakia and that Prague could definitely rely on France's aid to her ally. In regard to Austria he gave his word that they would leave London no peace, but then added in a rather resigned way that it would be necessary too, so that the British Government in case of catastrophe in Austria could shoulder the historic responsibility.

Monsieur Léon Blum was just as positive. The leader of the French Socialists expressed himself as delighted with the will for resistance shown by the working classes, who in those days once again showed proof of their political maturity. Even the leaders of Austrian Social-Democracy had now been won over to the conception that in Austria herself a broad "Austrian Front" must be achieved for defense against National-Socialism. French foreign policies should be activized for the benefit of her friends and allies. Czechoslovakia had nothing to fear. France would fulfill her obligations. But he agreed with the Czechoslovak statesman that an action to save Austria was urgently necessary also in Czechoslovakia's interests and he would not fail to give expression to this opinion, even to the present Government of France.

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In the meantime news came from Prague itself which proved how deeply Czechoslovakia realized that her fate was closely bound up with Austria's. The Austrian Ambassador in Prague reported that fear and resignation were to be noticed amongst the public. Even Czech Nationalists had got the idea that they were soon again to come under foreign rule, but would still insist on their nationality. The Czech people had lived the greater part of their history under foreign dominion but knew how to assert themselves. They must console themselves with this historical experience. Military circles were trying to combat this defeatist spirit. The Press and the members of the Government were showing great reserve. The attitude of Dr. Eisenlohr, the German Ambassador, had altered considerably since Hitler's Reichstag speech. He had now suddenly taken

to interfering with Czechoslovak domestic policy, which he had hitherto studiously avoided doing. The position of the German Activist Parties had become very difficult.

In a further dispatch Ambassador Marek reported that the Czechoslovak Government also had received information from London that Mr. Eden's resignation was due not so much to divergent views on Anglo-Italian relations and the Spain issue, as to the Austrian question—a proof of how well-informed they were in Prague on internal matters in British foreign politics.

News came from Athens, Sofia and Budapest indicating the widespread anxiety of the smaller States of Southern Europe caused by the Berchtesgaden ultimatum. They all felt solidarity with Austria, thinking to themselves that one day it would be their turn. Sympathy for a Danubian Pact was therefore growing. The Austrian Ambassador in Budapest reported on his conversation with leaders of Hungarian foreign politics, from which he concluded that Berchtesgaden had awakened in Hungary the keenest desire for self-determination and an outspoken wish to fight National-Socialism within her borders. Hungary's sympathy with Austria was increasing.

On the other hand the Austrian Ambassador in Warsaw thought that the sympathies for a Danubian Pact, which the Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, had referred to in one of his reports, were of a purely platonic type. Colonel Beck, when he had mentioned with praise the Laval-Mussolini conversations, had no thought of re-awakening the Stresa Front, but only wanted to take up a position indirectly against discrimination against Hungary by the States of the Little Entente. The leader of Polish foreign politics had made a corresponding statement during his last visit to Berlin.

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At the beginning of March it was clear that Europe had taken the blow delivered by the Berchtesgaden ultimatum in silence, and that no preventive action nor any serious warning was to follow, to deter Germany from the path along which she had started. But on the other hand it could not be denied that in the Western European countries public opinion was be-

ginning to awaken and that, in France especially, a movement was on foot which augured well for the future. And the feeling of solidarity amongst the smaller nations, particularly the States of the Danube Basin, was strengthened, so that from this direction, too, positive results might be expected from a determined and energetic action. Austria was alone, which again complicated her situation, but it was to be hoped that in the not too far distant future, that is to say before the second German *coup*, she would be alone no longer, so long as the internal forces of resistance had not thrown in their hand and the Front of Austrian self-determination appeared in all its strength. The only thing which could force Germany to respect Austria's independence would be the certainty that to possess Austria she would have to *fight*, even if at first only with Austria herself. The developments which were taking place here and there must have caused Berlin, where they knew how to value correctly the reaction of world publicity, to speed up the action decided against Austria.

XI

FROM BERCHTESGADEN TO THE ANNEXATION

HERR VON STEIN, First Secretary to the German Embassy in Vienna, in a conversation on the 14th February with Papen's secretary, von Ketteler, and the Vienna correspondent of the *Essener National-Zeitung*, said that Papen had told him after his return from Berchtesgaden that the Hitler-Schuschnigg meeting had gone off very well and peaceably. All points had been reasonably discussed. All the differences, of course, had not been settled, but Hitler had said that the questions of the N.S.D.A.P. in Austria, the Jews, etc., were mere details which would settle themselves in the course of honest co-operation. The discussion was confined to the larger questions affecting both States.

The Austrian Press again wrote at about the same time of the disavowal of the illegal National-Socialists by the Führer and of the visible despair reigning in the camp of the incorrigible Austrian Nazis. It was exactly as after the 11th July. In actual fact a great spirit of victory reigned in the Nazi camp. Only Leopold, Tavs and In der Mauer wore sad expressions. They knew why the Führer, who usually fought so tenaciously for his faithful followers, had agreed to "receive" them into the Reich. They had to expect the disgrace meted out to the unsuccessful. Official publication of the R.H. plan found among their papers would necessarily be equivalent to branding

the name of Hitler's deputy before the world. When one's name is Rudolf Hess, even if the danger happily passes by, the people responsible for exposing him to it are not forgotten. Leopold was even then condemned to play the part of an Austrian Strasser. The star of the Committee of Seven had set at least so far as the heads, Leopold and Tavs, were concerned. Only Jury and Komparsen were to continue, as were also Menghin and Globotschnig. But on the whole the intrigues of the German Club had scored a victory over the Teinfaltstrasse. Seyss-Inquart had now become the Führer's most valuable man in Austria and had been given the important work of preparing everything for a bloodless conquest of the country. Major Klausner, who no longer needed to remain in the background, took over the official leadership of the Patriotic Front.

Victory was celebrated in Munich. It was announced from the Brown House that Berchtesgaden was the Führer's first step towards the long-awaited direct influencing of Austria's development. The N.S.D.A.P. had taken a giant's stride forwards. Hitler's demand for the cessation of all persecution and Schuschnigg's promise to include "National" forces in responsible positions must increase the energy of Austrian National-Socialist organizations tremendously and would certainly bring them a lot of adherents. The movement could now work free from restrictions. The true leadership of the Party remained in Munich and would carry on the fight against the Austrian regime without cessation. The aim must be so to pile up the conflicts between the Patriotic Front and the "National" movement that soon the last preconditions could be secured for the final removal of the regime in Austria.

The Austrian Legionaries beamed with joy as they said: "Our return home is only a matter of weeks now. We shall soon be making preparations for a thorough clean-up."

At seven o'clock in the evening of the 15th February an official Victory Banquet was given in the Palm Court of the Café Luitpold in Munich to those Austrians who had emigrated to Germany. This banquet was still going on at noon on the 16th. An S.S. Brigadier of Austrian extraction made a victory

speech in which he declared: "At last the Austrians have come to grief. The meeting between Hitler and Schuschnigg has finally destroyed the confidence of Austrian executives. It is not the Generals or the Ministers who will decide the Austrian question, it is the little Police Chiefs in the country districts and towns. After Berchtesgaden they know that they have been championing a lost cause and that they must be on their guard to look after Austria since their leaders have been making pacts with each other." The leaders and the deputy-leaders of the S.S. *Standarts* "Danube" and "Edelweiss" were present. It was a lively banquet and practically everyone was intoxicated. The scenes which took place were accompanied by wild howls of victory which could be heard in the street. The citizens of Munich stood in amazement. There were not many flattering remarks to be heard about the Austrians or National-Socialism.

The leading National-Socialists were very free with their statements regarding forthcoming events. The President of the Reich Press Bureau and owner of the *Völkische Beobachter*, Herr Amann, who had been Hitler's Sergeant-Major in the Great War and was now one of his most intimate friends, stated that originally it was thought that Austria would be set free in six months. But after Schuschnigg's surprising submission it would be completed within three months. When asked how it was proposed to be done, he had replied that "Austria would be taken by invasion." Herr Bohle, the special commissioner for foreign affairs in the Reich Foreign Ministry, said that the next step would follow very quickly.

On the evening of the 20th February—the day of Hitler's speech to the Reichstag, in which he pointedly omitted to fulfill his Berchtesgaden promise to acknowledge publicly his recognition of Austria's independence—all the district leaders of the N.S.D.A.P. met in Berlin for a banquet which Hitler also attended. Before he arrived, Rudolf Hess presided. He was particularly proud and happy and gave free rein to his joy. He must have felt that the Führer personally had got him out of a difficult situation. So he made an effusive speech which in candor left nothing to be desired. "Once again the Führer's

genius has helped us out of a situation which had become untenable. Just as he seized power in 1933 when the Party was trembling on its foundations and he was able to obtain Hindenburg's decision in his favor, so now when a military crisis was taking place, he succeeded in bringing Schuschnigg to heel. Austria must be lined up, and this year too, for everything must be completed and ready by 1940 for the great day of reckoning."

* * *

Preparations for the "second step" were put in hand without delay. Patriotic Austrians soon began to notice that certain chosen members of the Legion, some 3,000, had come back into Austria by surreptitious means, with instructions to join up loyally in the Patriotic Front and other Austrian organizations. They were told to spread the news that Austria had been won over to National-Socialism, and that there was no point in holding out against it. From a Munich source which had repeatedly given reliable information to the Patriotic Front, came the news: Annexation is now decided upon, only the plans are not quite completed because the time and method depend on the international situation. The Munich Gestapo has selected officials from its ranks who are ready to take up positions in Austria. The Gestapo net is already organized for Austria on a district basis.

A "German Labor Office" had been established in the Seitzergasser in Vienna, directed by eight officials: one to find situations, one to look after clubs, one press agent, one film agent, one theatrical agent, and so on. This center was in practice an N.S.D.A.P. recruiting office, that is to say, a new Teinfaltstrasse. A welcome guest there was Ministerial Councilor Wolf. The inactivity of the Patriotic Front was freely commented on in Nazi circles, as was also the fact that the clerics were taking no part in a development which seriously threatened the Catholic Church in Austria. Surprise was also expressed that the Socialists had not instituted some counteraction. Large numbers of National-Socialists joined the "National" clubs, such as the Gymnastic Union, Anti-Semitic Union, School Club, etc.

On the 15th February, Seyss-Inquart was appointed Minister

of Public Security. On the 16th he went to Berlin. Schuschnigg had consented to the appointment of the National-Socialist Minister with a fairly light heart. Seyss-Inquart was a practicing Catholic, was a member of a Vienna branch of the Union of Catholic German Student Associations, as were Schuschnigg and Guido Schmidt, and was a lover of classical music. These were all reasons for the Chancellor to trust the personal qualities of his new colleague in the Cabinet. It is true that he considered Seyss-Inquart as a man who had carried the "all-German" ideology too far at the cost of Austria, but he had no doubts as to his loyalty. It was unfortunate that Seyss-Inquart when officially taking over his duties never mentioned the word "Austria" and even referred to the "German Department" which he now administered. It must also have given food for thought that his first official action was to take a journey to Germany, but a harmless explanation was found even for this. Seyss-Inquart had to discuss with Reich German officials the possibility of bringing the National-Socialists into trusted co-operation with patriotic circles. Information came from Berlin that Seyss-Inquart had had a long interview with Herr Himmler, Chief of the Gestapo. With singular optimism it was said that this interview dealt with co-operation between the Austrian and German police in combating Communism.

Actually the interview was with Himmler and his deputy, Heydrich, the notorious organizer of Terror. A detailed program was drawn up for the duties of the Minister of Security in Vienna in order that Austria might be made ready for attack at the earliest possible moment. Complete agreement was reached on the following points:—

- (1) Selected National-Socialists are to receive secret orders to watch the leading opponents to National-Socialism in Austria.
- (2) Complete lists are to be drawn up of suspicious persons, together with their connections at home and abroad.
- (3) Disturbances are to be provoked so as to enable the Minister of Security to enroll special police from the

National-Socialist ranks on the ground of strengthening the security organization.

- (4) All police-stations must be staffed by officials with National-Socialist tendencies. National-Socialists are to be appointed to all executive positions.
- (5) Strong measures must be taken regarding foreign papers hostile to National-Socialism.
- (6) A number of German emigrants living in Vienna, whose names are provided, are to be put into "protective custody" on a suitable pretext and prevented from leaving Austria. The Austrian Home Minister should therefore pay special attention to making suitable appointments in the Legal Department (Public Prosecutors).
- (7) A movement is to be started for the return of the Austrian Legionaries and special police units are to be formed from such returned Legionaries.
- (8) Any case of disturbances among the people shall be immediately and relentlessly suppressed, including the arrest of the leaders of Catholicism, Legitimism and Social-Democracy—the support of the Reich in such an event was promised.
- (9) A considerable number of selected Gestapo officials shall be sent to Austria "for educational purposes."

Seyss-Inquart had barely returned to Austria when reports began to come in of an unusual increase of German "students" and "commercial travelers" arriving in Vienna. This grew to such an extent that by the beginning of March every available furnished room in non-Jewish houses had been let to Reich Germans. They were the Gestapo officials and members of the S.S. who appeared in the streets in the evening of March 11th and began the movement against the existing regime.

No time was lost in finding an excuse for a further German action. National-Socialist demonstrations were started, at first small and then growing larger. They intimidated those who thought differently, and ostentatiously ignored the rules against displaying Party signs and uniforms. The agitation was con-

centrated on the provinces, especially the capitals of the departments: Graz, Linz, Innsbruck, Salzburg, Klagenfurt. So as to obtain the greatest recruiting and, at the same time, intimidating results, the militant National-Socialists of whole districts were on occasions assembled in one place. The most responsive towns proved to be Graz and Linz, as was only to be expected from the German national history of these places. A start was immediately made to form them into National-Socialist States within the State. In Graz especially the impression created was of being in a German town instead of an Austrian. Here the local authorities capitulated to "public pressure" and had concessions forced from them which went far beyond the Berchtesgaden agreement. The annexation in advance was indicated by Swastika flags and emblems, Hitler greetings, compact formations and stewards in Party uniforms. The Graz police and also part of the garrison mutinied. It was only with difficulty that the holding of a "German Day" was prevented. This was intended to be celebrated with tank divisions and a bombing squadron. Sixty thousand National-Socialists were to meet in the Styria capital from all over Austria. Seyss-Inquart, who was sent to Graz by the Government to settle matters, came to an agreement with the representatives of the illegal National-Socialist Party which went far beyond the concessions authorized by Schuschnigg. When the Chancellor heard the terms of the Seyss-Inquart Graz agreement, he had a nervous breakdown. This led to his first serious controversy with his Minister of Security. More were to follow. It was learned that a street collection in Graz made by youths in the forbidden Party uniform and on behalf of the forbidden National-Socialist Party, had yielded some 200,000 schillings in five days. The membership subscription to the Nazis was raised from two to four schillings. National-Socialist-directed industrial concerns such as the *Alpine Montangesellschaft* and the *Vorarlberger Spinnereien* contributed so generously that the National-Socialist fighting fund soon reached 300,000 schillings. Open threats of a march on Vienna were made in Graz and Linz.

The Reich German authorities no longer took the trouble to hide their interference. All telephone conversations from Austrian Embassies abroad which passed through Germany were tapped, and on occasion recorded on gramophone discs. The German Embassy in Vienna had no hesitation in making use of these and producing the records when intervening on the question of some remark to a foreign country made by an Austrian diplomat, which was alleged to be inimical to Germany. National-Socialist boycott signs appeared on Jewish businesses in Styria and were not removed by the police. The large firms which depended on Germany, especially the export houses, went so far as to discharge all Jewish employees. Reich German firms doing business with Austria asked their Austrian suppliers to declare themselves "free from Jews." The National-Socialist journalist, Herr Krüger, told a patriotic-minded Austrian quite openly in Vienna that the National-Socialists did not intend a calm and peaceful development. It would only be calm if the foreign political situation demanded it, but if the Reich felt free, the development would take place "with full dynamics." The pro-German population would not tolerate the formation of a "dictatorial People's Front Government." National-Socialists had instructions to prevent a People's Front Government, whose beginnings were already present in the then Cabinet, from ruling over Germans. In these speeches the ideological pretext, for the fight against the growing Austrian front of resistance, stood out quite clearly.

An American journalist who had been to Graz to get first-hand information on the situation had returned to Vienna horror-struck. He reported that in a tavern in Graz he had seen uniformed Nazis sitting calmly cleaning a disassembled machine-gun.

Nationalist-Socialist-minded officials were already beginning to assert themselves. Herr Buzzi, a director of the National Bank who gave a decision which was undoubtedly in the province of the president, Kienboeck, said bluntly and haughtily: "I am deciding those things now." When he was reproached by being told that his decision was against Austrian interests, he

retorted: "Well? And what about Germany's interests? Aren't they to be considered?" A further remark of his was that Germany no longer took an interest in the *Alpine Montangesellschaft*; one does not rent a room if one can buy the house itself. Under these conditions it is not surprising that Kienboeck handed in his resignation on the 18th February, because he felt that he could not take responsibility for the economic consequences he foresaw resulting from the Berchtesgaden agreement.

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The news of the German ultimatum and its acceptance by the Austrian Government, had the most crushing effect on the patriotic amongst the population. The officials of the Patriotic Front were very dejected, as also were the leaders and staff of the security services. A few days after Berchtesgaden an Austrian emigration started, especially amongst the Jews. Panic sales of Jewish businesses were the order of the day. Pessimism was so great that resistance was declared to be useless, even by those people who had hitherto been optimistic on account of the majority of patriotic people in the country.

Ten thousand National-Socialists summoned from the whole of the Tyrol held a torchlight procession in Innsbruck. This so frightened the local officials that they complained bitterly of being surprised by events. A tour round the Department, however, was reassuring, as it proved that the majority of the Tyrolese were patriotic. The leadership of the peasant organizations broke down completely and in these purely agrarian circles it was said that any solution would be acceptable so long as it showed a chance of increasing their exports.

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A former high official in the Monarchy had a conversation with the Austrian President on the occasion of an official dinner given by the Embassy of one of the Great Powers. This official said that Schuschnigg had made a great mistake when he returned from Berchtesgaden. Immediately on reaching Austrian soil he should have broadcast an appeal for help to the world, saying that violence had been offered him and aid must be forthcoming to save Europe. Of course he quite appreciated Schusch-

nigg's position. Everyone should now stand behind him. The situation was most critical and should be handled with the greatest care. Austria must take up her stand behind her wall and give no indication of weakness.

Even those who sympathized with National-Socialism now began seriously to consider the consequences for Austria from the establishment of a Hitler regime. They suddenly started looking round for means of defense and got into touch with those who were known to be implacable opponents of the annexation. They were generally of the educated classes whom a vague sentimentality had driven into the arms of National-Socialism; but now in contact with reality they were beginning to find out their mistake. The hour of realization was to strike too late for the majority of Austrian National-Socialists. Even Glaise-Horstenau was to confess to an old friend that he was worried. He gave as his opinion that Hitler would undertake a fresh action within a few months.

During this time the Austrian Chancellor received the president of one of the largest patriotic associations of Austria, who made no secret of the fact that he considered that the acceptance of the Berchtesgaden ultimatum had been a serious political mistake. The Chancellor looked very gloomy and aged. Although barely forty years of age, his hair had gone gray, his eyes were veiled, his voice was only kept firm by an effort. Kurt von Schuschnigg presented the picture of a broken man.

"Forgive my nervousness," he said when his visitor made a reference to the absurd exertions which the Head of the Austrian Government had had to make during so many years. "You still see me somewhat upset by the experience I had to go through at Berchtesgaden. Hitler bellowed at me and threatened me with all sorts of things. I am not easily upset, but that experience was worse than the 25th July. It was all I could do not to say straight out that the Chancellor of the sovereign State of Austria was not accustomed to put up with that sort of treatment, and to walk out of the room. I had to keep reminding myself that I was suffering these indignities not for myself but for our unhappy people. He told me that he was the best

Austrian living, that he alone knew what was good for the Austrian people and that he could not abandon them out of respect to his parents. This mixture of sentimentality and brutal threats particularly got on my nerves." "Perhaps it would have been better if you had followed your impulse," said the visitor, "particularly if this unfortunate meeting were to have no success. I must tell you that the general opinion here is that Papen and Guido Schmidt have got the better of you. We can't even mention the name of our Foreign Minister when speaking to representatives of the foreign Press. They look upon him as a traitor." "That is certainly a mistake," interrupted Schuschnigg. "You should have seen Guido Schmidt at Berchtesgaden and on the journey back. If I have been able to hold my head high, it is greatly due to his calm behavior and, I can put it in no other way, his true friendship." "Perhaps he was not quite so surprised as you," replied the other. "In any case, amongst the patriotic-minded the feeling is very much against him. I regret very much, Herr Chancellor, to have to speak of unpleasant matters at this time which is in any case so trying for you, but even your attitude is not understood in Austria." "I must put up with that. History will justify me. If Austria is to be saved there is no other way." "But I must point out that we have a large number of most resolute men prepared to resist to the last. The Legitimists, the working classes. The wish to stand by the Government is very strong amongst the Social-Democrats. Former leading Trade Unionists have told me that they are prepared to stand with you if the Unions are given a certain autonomy with the right to choose their own leaders on a parity basis. And that is only a formal condition. But all these people have got to be called. If this discouragement continues at the speed it is going now, there won't be anyone left in a few weeks who will dare to offer himself. Something must be done to raise their spirits. An encouraging word from you could still work wonders. Also a statement is necessary for foreign countries to show them that Austria does not consider herself lost. I was talking yesterday to some English newspaper correspondents. They all told me that public opinion in Eng-

land was in favor of action on behalf of Austria. But they doubted the feelings of our people and still more of our leaders and were awaiting some action which would indicate our determination for independence. Otherwise there is no reason for foreign countries to engage themselves on our behalf." "I have not any great hopes in that direction. The only one who could really help us is Mussolini. He has deserted me since Berchtesgaden. He seems to have got a clearer notion of the danger now. I have the idea that he would not be dissatisfied if we were to take up a firmer stand in the future. At any rate he is suggesting it indirectly. You know that the former Italian Ambassador, Salata, has been in Vienna since a few days ago. He told me a few interesting and not unpleasant things. I am of your opinion, we must fight the state of panic which is growing in the country. We have suffered a blow, but there is no reason for despair. Perhaps I can do something about it in my speech to Parliament, which will be a reply to Hitler's speech tomorrow."

The speech which Kurt von Schuschnigg made on the 24th February not only did "something" but a great deal towards raising the people's spirits. Cardinal Innitzer in a letter to his diocese characterized this speech as an act of liberation. This expressed the general feeling both at home and in foreign countries. This speech, whose high points, "so far and no further" and "Red-White-Red until we're dead," became the slogans of the patriotic movements in the final struggle, could only be interpreted as resistance to the uttermost. It was so contrary to the Chancellor's attitude of the last two weeks that the impression was spread that Schuschnigg must have received some binding guarantee from Mussolini. With one stroke the Chancellor had become highly popular with the Austrian people, including the Socialists. He had struck just that note which every true Austrian and Europe in general was wanting from the Head of the Austrian Government. Suddenly all the depression of the last few days disappeared. On the evening of the 24th February it was the Nazis who went about with long faces as a storm of patriotic fervor swept over Austria. So great was the

suggestive power of this one speech that the illusion was given, and even took root in the minds of calm and erstwhile pessimistic people, that Austria was already saved and the danger averted.

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But those who reflected could not conceal from themselves the fact that it was only a flash in the pan and that this fine and necessary speech was not followed by deeds. After a few days of depression, the National-Socialists, encouraged by the Reich, raised their heads once more and eagerly continued their tactics of forming States within the State, as in Graz, at various points, and of creating an impression of complete mastery of the streets and of public opinion. Similar scenes to those enacted at Graz took place in Linz. The speech made by Seyss-Inquart in Linz a few days after the Chancellor's speech plainly indicated how the conception of Austria held by the representative of the "National Opposition" differed from that of his Government Chief. Sadly it had to be stated in a report sent a few days later to Austrians living abroad: "And so far as those proud words are concerned, 'so far and no farther,' it must unfortunately be said that since the 24th February we have gone a good deal farther without hearing from Mussolini."

Berlin was furious. Authorization had been given for the Chancellor's speech to be broadcast, as after the shock he had sustained at Berchtesgaden only a weak, peace-seeking speech was expected. Rudolf Hess characterized the Chancellor's words as "unprecedented impudence." Ley, the leader of the Workers' Front, said that he was "horrified" at the effect of this speech on the German workers. Goering attacked Guido Schmidt because he had not stopped it, saying: "This ambitious little Guido Schmidt seems to be a bit of a traitor." The Austrian National-Socialists voiced their complaints to Berlin. Hitler had spoken in a conciliatory (!) manner and the Austrian Chancellor had replied with a fighting speech. Probably they were going to "twist" the latest agreement as they did the July Treaty. They were consoled by Rudolf Hess. No one had the right to interpret Hitler's speech as if it were a departure from the well-known aims of the National-Socialists. Nothing had changed, particu-

larly the aim in connection with Austria and no one in the world could stop Germany from bringing about the solution in Austria which she desired.

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Patriotic Austrians had a few more solid reasons than Schuschnigg's speech for feeling that all was not lost. Parallel with a very intensive and successful propaganda by the Legitimists went action by the Trade Unions. A conversation which Schuschnigg held with Vienna factory delegates had results which were at least not unfavorable. Even though negotiations went on right to the end, and even though the exaggerated caution of the older leaders of the Unions prevented the conclusion of an agreement with the Socialists, nevertheless there were many spontaneous demonstrations of the will to resist by workers of all parties which raised great hopes for the future. The words "Freedom for Austria" were the spontaneous liquidation of February 1934 in the feeling of the masses. The efforts of the younger Trade Union leaders to bring about an agreement began to bear fruit, and this was also well understood abroad.

Immediately after the Berchtesgaden ultimatum a whole series of trade union demonstrations took place for the defense of Austria's independence. There was a multiplicity of resolutions by the officials of various Unions and by delegates of various factories and branches of industry. On the 22nd February there was an imposing demonstration of factory delegates from the whole of Austria; the resolution passed breathed their fighting spirit and determination. It was circulated to the workers in all undertakings, and within forty-eight hours had received nearly a million signatures. The Government, however, asked for this to be stopped, so as to avoid giving the National-Socialists, who on their part began to collect signatures, any pretext for their action.

Certainly the attitude taken up by the working classes, and the private "plebiscite" of the Trade Unions, strengthened the Chancellor when he in turn took the fateful decision to take a plebiscite and prove to the world the will for independence of the majority of the Austrian people.

XII

THE LAST CARD

EARLY IN JANUARY 1938 Kurt von Schuschnigg was visited by a trusted colleague who reported to him on impressions abroad and expressed his anxiety regarding the results of an "all-German" policy. Schuschnigg replied sharply to those who held the view that the Restoration of the Monarchy appeared to be the last and only means of saving Austria. "Certainly we must maintain our traditions," he said, "and repulse every attack on those who held responsibility in the past, that is to say, the House of Hapsburg and its loyal servants; but were we today to aim at a Restoration, in view of Germany's attitude it would be a policy which I can only characterize as insane and suicidal." The Chancellor looked tired and very worried. He had the appearance of a man who could no longer trust his own political path but could not make up his mind to alter it, and so any arguments against a change must be repeated loudly and emphatically both to himself and others. His entourage found in these days that the alertness with which he tackled problems in 1936 had left him. Schuschnigg obviously no longer derived any pleasure from his work. His will for work diminished, his nerves began to play him tricks. His political and public life seemed to disgust him, and his only consolation was his private life and always his beloved music.

Even in the winter of 1936-37 the threat of armed invasion by the Germans had been his nightmare. At the beginning of

1937 he seemed to have regained hope, but soon again he was overcome by his cares. He decided that his method should be to give not the slightest pretext to Germany for invasion, and to make the best possible use of Italian influence. Even his attitude towards a Restoration was completely ruled by this idea. The visitor who had just heard him utter such bitter and hard words against the Legitimist movement, asked in rather a surprised way whether he believed in a serious German invasion, of which they were talking so suspiciously bombastically. "I know quite well," replied the Chancellor, "that behind all these threats there's quite a lot of bluff and intimidation, but I also know that if we had a Restoration they would really march in. Unfortunately I cannot doubt the genuineness of Goering's statement, for instance, which he made in this connection in the autumn of 1936 and which he has since repeated on many occasions. He told our Ambassador in Belgrade straight out: 'If there is a Restoration we march in!' He also told Tauschitz¹ on one occasion: 'Tell your Chancellor that we will not permit a Restoration under any circumstances, whether the fellow's name is Otto or anything else.' And again in the autumn of 1936, that is to say a few months after the July Treaty in which Germany undertook not to interfere in our domestic policy, Goering had no qualms in saying to Tauschitz: 'The divisions to occupy Austria in the case of a Restoration are already detailed.' You know as well as I that there is a German-Yugoslav agreement against a Restoration. The Quai d'Orsay knew of it in 1936."

At every meeting with the political leaders of the Legitimists, Schuschnigg would bring out these arguments. Austrian Legitimism, which had been looking after its own foreign affairs for some time, knew that a Restoration would not be met with insurmountable opposition from London and Paris or even Prague, as Guido Schmidt kept trying to persuade the Chancellor by showing deceptive dispatches from complaisant Ambassadors. But it was in vain that the Legitimist leaders, who had numerous personal connections with British and French in-

¹Austrian Ambassador in Berlin.

fluent politicians, constantly brought proofs that he was mistaken and being deceived. During the years that Schuschnigg had been at the head of the Government, he had become very sensitive. He would get particularly excited if the correctness of his information was doubted. He took it as a personal offense if the reliability of his intelligence service was questioned.

During the conversation already mentioned he was in this state of nerves. "Insane. Suicidal." He repeated these words with peculiar sharpness. And as his visitor appeared somewhat surprised and painfully moved, he continued after a pause, in a slightly less excited tone: "We have not given up all idea of a Restoration and we would not do so, but we must keep this possibility for our last card."

"Last card!" This expression was constantly cropping up during the last few years in countless diplomatic conversations with representatives of various countries. Schuschnigg and his colleagues had weighed the pros and cons times out of number, had discussed the advantages and disadvantages of solving the question by a Restoration. But they always consoled themselves with the decision that whilst they would not lose sight of the "last card," the time was not ripe for a Restoration or, as Schuschnigg had the habit of saying since January 1937, "it was not in the field of vision." For years the Chancellor had certainly been convinced that the only permanent solution of the Austrian question was a Restoration of the Monarchy of the hereditary ruling House. But this permanent solution was side-tracked in order to meet the various sensibilities and forms of opposition based on the most contradictory motives. He had, however, listened to the Legitimists, and in spite of the strongest pressure from Berlin had never renounced the Restoration. But he was not unwilling to tell the opponents to the Restoration that he did not consider it an actual or urgent question. In this way the Chancellor thought that he was displaying statesmanlike skill by putting off every decision and thus, so he argued, leaving all paths open for the future. The slogan: "Neither Restoration or Annexation" was for years the favorite not only amongst French, Italian and Czechoslovak diplomats.

This comforting slogan also expressed the growing tendency of the Chancellor to avoid making decisions. In a speech which he made at Eisenstadt in Burgenland on the 14th April and in which, incidentally, he spoke very plainly on Legitimism and its aims, he took a firm stand against those people at home and abroad who spoke of "Annexation or Restoration." The neither-nor policy was much closer to the Chancellor's nature than the either-or, and also more comforting to European diplomacy in general. So, on account of his Eisenstadt speech, Schuschnigg was greatly praised by the Press of the world and referred to as a particularly clever and far-sighted politician. Once again the world refused to see that the dynamics of the National-Socialist adversary allowed no half-solution, no policy of *status quo*, and that both the nature of the new Austria and the international situation urgently demanded the either-or solution.

Anyone who closely studied the Austrian problem, its development since the war and especially through the period of the formation of the Third Reich and the totalitarian pressure of the National-Socialist regime, had to be merely a tactician or a day-to-day politician if he failed to see that Austria's fate could only be decided by "Annexation or Restoration."

Internally the Restoration of the Monarchy was the only means of bridging the tragic chasm which had appeared in February 1934, and to attain true national unity on the basis of Austrian thought. But this unity was a first consideration for a successful resistance by the Austrian people to German annexation. All Schuschnigg's efforts truly to win the working classes to an Austria on the Dollfuss system, by maintaining and extending the social legislation and by a certain liberalism and authoritative rule, got very little further than a beginning. The 12th February had bequeathed a political and not a social problem, so the solution had to be sought in the province of national politics. But for psychological reasons this could not come from Dollfuss or his heirs. After a civil war it is not the victorious party, to which in the case of Austria Schuschnigg would also belong, which can bring peace, nor is it, of course,

revenge by the conquered. True peace can only be brought by an arbitrary power whose position is above the parties.

In actual fact the Austrian work-people, who were ready to collaborate and share responsibility with the State, preferred the Legitimist movement to the Patriotic Front into which efforts were being made to draw them. Only in the hour of greatest danger could they decide to abandon their reserve against Schuschnigg and the Patriotic Front, but by then they had missed their opportunity to provide a really constructive solution of the problem. Legitimism on the other hand could exert quite a powerful attraction, particularly since the Emperor had published his social program and had spread it by personal letter and statements at home and abroad. The position taken up by the heir to the throne against social reaction and the privileges of economic power, was very clearly defined and it was impossible to confuse the firm religious conviction visible behind this position with ordinary tactics. The result was that large numbers of the Austrian working classes and Social-Democrats were able to expect a return of legality and constitutional guarantee, from a social Monarchy. Austria had experienced an over-sharpening of the parliamentary system to a point where the parties faced each other with exclusive dogmas and in latent civil war. This was followed by an authoritative regime where freedom and democratic control were neglected. Reconciliation could only be brought by a Monarchy.

The foreign and national political reasons for a Restoration were even more urgent and evident. The Peace Treaty of St. Germain had made a national State of the former German-speaking Dual Monarchy. The counter-balance which the old Austria had to set against an over-emphasis of national thought had disappeared. The independence of the new State had now become a purely negative conception. It excluded an *Anschluss* and the incorporation of Austria in an all-German National State without offering any alternative positive ideal. But independence as a negative conception could not have sufficient powers of attraction, especially to youth which was struggling to get free not only from economic but also from moral restric-

tions. The ideal of National-Socialism could only be combated by an ideal by which the masses could be inspired. Since Austria, however, had become a National State, the Austrian nation could only win embodiment and the symbolic representation of its political individuality through a Dynasty. Only in this way would it be possible to combat the mechanical, materialistic and biological national conception of the theory of language and race, the blood and soil myth of National-Socialism. Only in this way could the falsification of the national ideal be countered, which had even been aided by patriots giving the honorable name of "National circles" to opponents of Austrian independence (even though such deprecating additions as "ultra" were made). The confusion of the terms Race, People, Nation and State, against which the Prelate Seipel had warned in his writings, has never been disentangled. And the responsible people have never been sufficiently fortunate to protect the Austrian German-speaking people who have their own political and cultural tradition, from propaganda proclaiming their inclusion in the German "people." In any case the material, economic and party-political points of view were decisive in spite of all "national" and pan-German ideas.

The favor shown towards an *Anschluss* by the Social-Democrats led by a Sudeten German, Otto Bauer (born in Reichenberg, Bohemia), doubtless originated in the pre-war opposition to the Hapsburg Monarchy and its political exponents and also in recollections of the "Great Germany" and democratic revolution of 1848. But the greatest of all causes was the economic need of little Austria after the Treaty of St. Germain. It was not an easy problem to solve. Here was a State whose capital had been designed to deal with an empire of fifty million souls, provided with its administrative, industrial, commercial and economic equipment, now dealing with a hinterland of four and a half million population, mostly poor peasants. In view of the political and economic nationalizing of the Succession States, which seemed to have finally broken up the economic unity in the Danube Basin, the thoughts of an *Anschluss* must have been attractive. This attraction was increased for the Austrian

Social-Democrats because they could point to the Weimar Republic as a State run by their Reich German comrades and Party friends—a mistake which was put right at a comparatively late date. The leaning towards the Reich in the Left parties was even more firmly anchored politically and sociologically than in the German-National camp itself.

For a long time Seipel was the only leading statesman in post-war Austria who knew how to value correctly the significance of the monarchic tradition, and was certainly convinced himself that the permanent solution must eventually be found in a Restoration. The same conviction led Dollfuss, who was originally a Republican, into political proximity to Legitimism. His strong political instinct soon showed him that the fight for independence could only be waged on a basis of old-Austrian tradition. When speaking in the summer of 1933 to Duke Max von Hohenberg, son of the murdered Archduke Franz-Ferdinand, he had said: "I am a Republican." But at a second meeting in the autumn of the same year he had to confess: "I am gradually coming round to your point of view." In March 1934 it was arranged between Dollfuss, the Duke von Hohenberg and Colonel Adam, then general secretary of the Patriotic Front, that in view of the heir to the throne being made a Citizen of Honor in the town of Ragelsdorf, a great pro-Legitimist Press campaign should be started. But this campaign was started too soon and brought about a fierce reaction from Germany and Czechoslovakia. Dollfuss immediately sent a man he could trust to Ragelsdorf, where the Duke von Hohenberg was already, and stopped the reading of three autograph letters from the Emperor wherein he had sent out his program. On account of Dollfuss' not having carried out his promise, an angry scene took place between him and his Minister of Education, Schuschnigg, who as a confirmed Legitimist seriously reproached the Chancellor. So as to smooth over the differences between the Emperor and Dollfuss, Schuschnigg, on the instructions of the Chancellor, visited the Emperor in June 1934. Reconciliation was quickly achieved.

When Schuschnigg came to power after the murder of Dollfuss, he took the opposite line of development to his predecessor.

He thought he "could do it alone," and looked upon the Restoration as a final crown to his work, namely the foundation of a new Austria. It turned out to be Schuschnigg himself who created the rivalry between the new and the old Austria or, in the colors of post-war Austria and the Monarchy, red-white-red and black-yellow.

The attempt to fight National-Socialism "within the German solution," had come to grief once—in the Saar plebiscite—without Vienna's having learned the lesson from the consequences, close as they were. In his speech of January 1938, which has been mentioned before, Schuschnigg said that he had never forbidden anyone from emphasizing his Austrianism but this should not be done in the form of opposition to Germanism. Besides, Austrian Germanism was very different from the Germanism of National-Socialism, and the world made no mistake about that. It was only necessary to stress the Catholic foundation and particularly the peaceful and European character of Austrian Germanism as against the new German Imperialism and Militarism. Austria wanted peace, not peace at any price, but peace so far as is humanly possible. The barriers which the Chancellor believed he had raised against the Third Reich, Catholicism and pacifism, were to prove too weak.

For centuries it had been the Dynasty which symbolized the embodiment of those Austrian qualities which differed so greatly from Prussianism and that *Deutschtum* (Germanism) so ringed round by Prussianism. After 1866, and to a still greater degree after 1918, these marks of distinction had been lost in the Reich, and the original "all-German" mission, which the House of Hapsburg represented against Prussianism, was transferred to Austria alone and confined to her. The Austro-German mission, which was so clearly foreseen and worked for as early as 1866 by a North German historian, the Hanoverian Onns Klopp, included a national political basis, the ideal of federalism. This could only be carried out against the *Deutschtum* of Bismarck and still more, that of Hitler, but not by an Austria which as a "second German State" was a sort of mild complement to Prussian Germany.

A Catholic pan-Germanism could no longer be an antidote to National-Socialism after the influences to which Reich Catholicism had been subjected in the time of Wilhelm, the pre-Hitler time of the National-German movement, and finally the time of the Catholic "Bridge-Builders." By force of circumstances, Legitimism only was capable of being such an antidote. Since 1933 and still more since 1936, those who could not become reconciled to National-Socialism were crossing to Legitimism in increasing numbers. Of particular importance were those fresh forces from the working classes. Quite apart from the Catholics, all that was left of the Liberals and those against *Nazification* also went the same way. Thus, under pressure of the National-Socialist enemy of the State, to which Austria was more and more being subjected, Legitimism was becoming transformed into a purely Austrian popular movement. The time was long since gone when it was hardly to be taken into account, except, as Baron Wiesner put it, by "men faithful to duty and tradition," and chiefly recruited from titled and officers' families. Under the honorary presidency of the Duke von Hohenberg and directed by Baron Wiesner, about twenty-five Legitimist Societies or Federations were grouped round a central organization, *Eiserner Ring*—the Iron Ring. This organization was run by an executive committee of seven members assisted by an advisory sub-committee of twelve whose activities were co-ordinated by a central office in Vienna.

The principal part in the *Eiserner Ring* was taken by the "Association of Austrians." Branches of this organization were situated in all the districts of Vienna, in all large and many small towns. In addition Vienna had special sections for work-people, students, women. Particular care had been taken with the section for youths. Besides the actual members of the Federation and other Legitimist associations there were a considerable number of sympathizers or citizens won over to the principle of the cause, such as members of societies whose presidency had been accepted by the Emperor or the inhabitants of places of which the Emperor had been made a Citizen of Honor. This latter movement comprised 1,540 districts.

Since the 11th July 1936 it was no longer the Patriotic Front but almost entirely organized Legitimism which could be looked upon as a militant defense movement against National-Socialist penetration. A sharp watch kept by the Legitimists prevented, on the whole, any National-Socialists from smuggling themselves into the Association for the purpose of gaining information or stirring up trouble as they had done in the Patriotic Front and other Government organizations. The Nazi headquarters often complained of the lack of real information of what was going on amongst the Legitimists.

After the fading out of the Patriotic Front, it was the public meetings of the Legitimist societies who gave the country the feeling of a popular majority animated by a will to oppose National-Socialism. The great demonstration held in the Vienna Concert Hall on the occasion of the Emperor's twenty-fifth birthday revealed the power and extent of Legitimism which had dared to lead the defense against National-Socialism. From the moment of entering the Hall there was the feeling of being in a powerful movement of active militants who were not merely demonstrating "out of duty" but were filled with the true fighting spirit. The Legitimist leaders had had great trouble to prevent the Austrian patriotic masses becoming discouraged by the inactivity of the Government and the Patriotic Front against the Nazis, and then suddenly bursting out into uncontrollable energy. The feeling that action should be taken whilst the danger could still be overcome was general, and probably strongest amongst the lower class within the movement. These men felt that the restraint recommended by the Chancellor to the patriotic people was too difficult in view of the National-Socialist propaganda and terrorist methods met with every day. On this account the demonstration of the 20th November was extremely "activistic." The Archduke Eugene and the Archduchess Adelheid, who were present in a box, were rapturously cheered. The enthusiasm, which needed no incitement from the speakers, did not die down with the end of the meeting. The demonstration continued in the streets, where thousands of people who had not been able to get into the over-filled Hall were patiently waiting

for the end of the meeting. The fact that quite half of those at the demonstration came from the working classes made a great impression. The Legitimist Youth under the leadership of August Lovrek were shouting "We want the Emperor!" which was taken up by all the demonstrators.

The attraction of Legitimism to the working classes and to youth proved that the doctrine had re-created the ideal inspiration and for the last few months had brought about a real dynamic Austrian movement. It had slowly died down in the Patriotic Front after the death of Dollfuss and had flared up anew in Legitimism. This had produced a certain amount of jealousy from the Patriotic Front which showed itself, on more or less public occasions, in bitter and unpleasant remarks. At a conference of the Headquarters staff of the Social Workers' Union of the Patriotic Front, a prominent member of the Party made a direct attack on the methods and aims of the Legitimist movement and against the watchword of a social monarchy.

At last it was only the Legitimists who dared protest, in all loyalty it is true but with all the greater candor, against the results of the July Treaty and the continual concessions granted to the "Ultra-Nationals," that is, in fact, to the National-Socialists. It could be said in favor of the Legitimist movement that they had persistently fought against the *Anschluss* since 1918 and had maintained their faith in Austria in the face of skepticism and renunciation.

It was thanks to the support of the Legitimists that Prelate Seipel was able in 1931 to crush the Schober Customs Union plan. The Austrian renaissance introduced by Dollfuss would never have been possible without Legitimist aid. Since the 12th February 1934, and to a greater degree since the 11th July 1936, there was no purely Austrian solution other than a Restoration. The republican-democratic regime died with the civil war of 1934; the Fascist movement, which could never have been established against the will of such a crushing majority of the population, lost its last chance with the liquidation of the *Heimwehr*.

The most convincing proof that Legitimism was actually the

best solution for Austria, lay in the fact that the National-Socialists regarded it as their most powerful adversary known and unknown, and that even after the annexation they raged against this movement with particular fury. The main attack by National-Socialist propaganda was directed against the Legitimist movement.

Thus it was that at the end of 1937, Legitimism gathered round itself all forces of resistance whilst in the other camps there reigned a feeling of defeat, paralysis and impotence. The Legitimist campaign of meetings opened on the 11th January 1938 in the working-class centers of Vienna as well as in the country. This produced an explosion of fury from the National-Socialists. In view of the campaign the "Illegals" seriously drew up a plan for assassinating all the Legitimist leaders. Documents seized by the police in their raid on the Teinfaltstrasse proved this. Finally, however, the Nazi leaders decided on a less dangerous method, which was to make it impossible to hold Legitimist meetings owing to a campaign of terror.

The leader of the illegal National-Socialist S.S. troops, Rodenbücher, who was living in Germany at that time, distributed a pamphlet to his troops in which there appeared amongst other things the following:

"The boundless impudence of the Jewish-Legitimist movement has reached its limit! The 11th of January shall be the day of its extermination. . . . Adolf Hitler's guards will prove on that day that Vienna is as 'brown' as it was in 1933. . . . No meeting of theirs is to proceed calmly. Speakers and other prominent people are to be attacked. . . . Comrades of the S.A. and B.O.¹ have received similar instructions. An S.S. leader will be in command of operations."

This National-Socialist counteraction was a dismal failure. It was not able to prevent one of the sixty Legitimist meetings from being held, nor was one seriously disturbed. These events proved that the National-Socialists did not have the majority of the people behind them and that their terrorism was powerless against a determined movement which was ready for battle.

¹ *Betriebsorganisationen*—Factory Organizations.

Again the Legitimist movement had pointed the way to safety. It would have been possible even after the Berchtesgaden ultimatum. The 11th January had mobilized all the true Austrian forces especially the working classes and the youth. They could have been counted on even after the disastrous meeting between Hitler and Schuschnigg on the 12th February 1938.

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The Federal Chancellor had always looked upon Austrian Legitimism merely as a reserve army rather on the lines of a tactical toy. He tried to make use of this movement to counter any German demands which seemed to go too far; he used it in his discussions with von Papen which led up to the July Treaty. On that occasion Schuschnigg had threatened Papen, and Papen had threatened Hitler with a Restoration. Also in internal politics Schuschnigg had tried to profit by playing off the existence of the Austrian Legitimists against the "Ultra-Nationals." On every occasion on which Germany attempted to interfere with purely Austrian matters in order to change their course, Schuschnigg would give the greatest freedom to Legitimist propaganda. But as soon as the pressure relaxed, he would restrict it again. He continually drew the leaders' attention to the danger of a German invasion if the anti-National-Socialist forces, and particularly the Legitimist forces, became too active.

Thus the Restoration was not for Schuschnigg an aim in itself, at least not an aim of his policy. He merely regarded it as a means of maintaining the independence of Austria. In the treatment of this question also he lost himself in tactics from which he expected salvation. When at the beginning of 1937 the Legitimist movement, which to start with was supported by Schuschnigg himself, proved to be a power in the land and gradually spread, the Chancellor tried his favorite maneuver. He attempted to make use of the slight internal differences and play them one against the other, the system which had worked so well with the *Heimwehr* but which was to fail with the National-Socialists. Now he tried to form a Government Legitimism, a red-white-red which was to oppose the radical black-yellow tendency in the Legitimist movement. This was all the

more absurd since Legitimism had arrived at a stage of organization strongly centered politically. It had no program of territorial revision, kept within the limits of the Treaty of St. Germain and insisted that no juridical bar to a Restoration should appear in any agreement.

The Chancellor even thought that he could use the movement as a tactical instrument in foreign politics. He had tried to obtain a statement from Czechoslovakia, to whom he had nothing to offer, that she would be satisfied with a formal declaration of the "non-actuality" of the Restoration. And this at a time when it was obvious that the main opposition to a Restoration of the Monarchy came from Berlin and not from Prague. Since the 11th July 1936 a complete change of front had taken place internationally on this point.

In February of that year the Little Entente protested to Paris against the toleration of Austrian Legitimism by the Western Powers. At that time Prince Starhemberg had stopped in Paris on his way back from London, having represented the Austrian Government at the funeral of King George V. Schuschnigg himself had already given up having any personal contact with the Governments of the Western Powers. The diplomatic action by the Little Entente was intended to obtain a renunciation by Austria of the Restoration by the roundabout way of French influence. In an interview with M. Flandin, the French Foreign Minister, Prince Starhemberg said that the Austrian Government would certainly do nothing which might endanger the peace of Europe. He was always anxious to live on good terms with his neighbors.

From this M. Flandin had deduced an implied statement of renunciation of the Restoration, and without telling the Prince he informed the official French Press accordingly. That same evening, the Vice-Chancellor met M. Flandin at a reception at the Austrian Embassy and asked for an explanation of the one-sided communiqué given to the Press. M. Flandin, obviously very embarrassed, murmured something about "there's been some misunderstanding" and arranged for a correction to be made by the Agence Havas which, in fact, was no correction at all.

It happened that the Emperor was in Paris at the time. He had not met Prince Starhemberg. Starhemberg would have liked to have paid him a private visit at Steenockerzeel on his return from London. But the British and French Governments had drawn the attention of Vienna to the fact that an audience granted by the Emperor to a member of the Austrian Government between two official visits to London and Paris was highly undesirable. This incident did not help Schuschnigg to feel favorably inclined towards the Western Powers. His bad opinion was confirmed later by the way in which they received the military reoccupation of the Rhineland and the renunciation of Locarno. The Chancellor would not recognize that times had begun to change.

Whilst Schuschnigg was in Paris, Baron Wiesner, sent by the Emperor, called on him at the Ritz Hotel to ask for an explanation of the communiqué published in the French Press. As the correction by M. Flandin did not come up to expectations, the Prince was compelled to give his own formal explanation to the Austrian Press. But this unfortunate experience caused the Austrian Chancellor to look upon the diplomatic capacity of his Vice-Chancellor with scepticism. This, with the Prince's thoughtless telegram to Mussolini after the capture of Addis Ababa, was one of the reasons for throwing the *Heimwehr* overboard from the ship of Government.

* * *

About the middle of March, a few days after the reoccupation of the Rhineland, the Emperor was again in Paris, coming from Switzerland. With his extraordinary and quick-thinking political mind, he calculated the inevitable consequences of the action of March 7th and was very disturbed. "So," he said, "Hitler has succeeded in splitting Europe in two." Then he added in decisive tones: "The next step will be Austria." He was alluding to the far-reaching effects of the collapse of the Stresa Front, brought about by the Abyssinian war, then at its height. The possibility of a sudden attack by Hitler against Austria was discussed. Clearly as the Emperor analyzed the situation, depressing as it was, he did not give way to that pessimism

which may be the precursor of political inactivity. His lively temperament reacted immediately. Emperor Otto is not one of those statesmen like Schuschnigg or Bruening, weakened by prolonged brain-work; his wealth of political knowledge leads him to sift all problems to the bottom, his reflections do not make him too weary to act. He is by no means one who puts down his head and charges, but he is a man of action in the best sense of the word, one who can grasp a political situation in a flash, intuitively sees it in all its possibilities, what opportunities it offers, when, where and how it should be acted on. Word went round of a "symbolic occupation" of the Rhineland with which Germany would be contented. This needed thought. But the Emperor said:

"If Hitler attacks Austria and if at that moment the Western Powers are incapable of making up their minds and uniting to hit back, if Italy cannot mobilize on the Brenner Pass because she is busy in East Africa and in the Mediterranean, then there is only one thing to be done: defend ourselves as long as possible. One corner of Austria at least must remain and be free. Our resistance will wake up Europe from its apathy. But we must help ourselves, otherwise no one will help us."

This view, which the Emperor held to the last, was in direct opposition to that of Schuschnigg, who thought that Austria could only defend herself if she were assured beforehand of help from outside.

The clouds began to dissipate. The capture of Addis Ababa and the raising of sanctions by the League of Nations forced Hitler to take precautions on the Italian side. Instead of an attack in force against Austria, which was certainly the original intention, a peace offensive was started which ended in the July Treaty three months after the occupation of the Rhineland. So the Emperor had made no mistake in his judgment of the results of this agreement nor in the hidden danger to Austria. He sent a special messenger to Schuschnigg with his opinions and views on this subject.

For several months, that is to say since the abrogation of the law against the Hapsburgs, there had been a regular exchange

of views between the Emperor and the Chancellor. By tacit agreement, the Emperor had consented not to enter his country without previously letting Schuschnigg know. But he had placed the active and valuable forces of Legitimism at the Chancellor's disposal in the fight for Austrian independence, under the condition that this offer was made only so long as the Chancellor was seriously resolved to defend this independence with every means in his power and to the bitter end. This condition imposed in the country's interest was to play an important part in the future. This action shows that the Emperor had no personal ambition in the matter but was thinking only of the existence and good of his country.

The warnings sent to Schuschnigg by the Legitimists after the 11th July made him think. They were quickly confirmed by his own experiences. The demonstrations of the 29th July on the occasion of the Olympic festivities proved to him that Austrian National-Socialism was still very much alive. Dissatisfaction amongst the Legitimists, the patriots and the Catholics was visibly increasing. The Chancellor saw that the population was gradually slipping from him, seeking a reliable and steady center of resistance, and that it was beginning to gather under the banner of Legitimism. In these circumstances he decided to seek an interview with the Emperor. They had already met in September 1935. Then Schuschnigg had said that the most serious opposition to a Restoration came from Italy. Mussolini had taken up a definitely negative attitude. The Emperor replied that he had heard differently and suggested that he should send his friend and confidant, Baron Wiesner, to Mussolini so as to find out exactly what his views were on the question. Schuschnigg agreed and declared himself prepared to make all the arrangements for Baron Wiesner's journey to Rome.

This took place from the 3rd to the 5th November. Baron Wiesner was received by the Duce who told him, in effect:—

"I am a Legitimist and a Monarchist. I am for all countries. Were I not convinced of the necessity and utility of the Monarchy as a permanent institution, I could have swept the House

of Savoy from Italy like this." He made an expressive gesture, sweeping his hand over the desk.

The only obstacle Mussolini could see to a Restoration in Austria, was the Croatian question. True, there were objections from Germany, but they were not insurmountable. In this respect, Mussolini expressed himself very freely and very disrespectfully regarding the real power of the Third Reich. If Yugoslavia could be made neutral, Germany would not move. Count Ciano, the Foreign Minister, spoke in a similar strain to Mussolini during two interviews he gave to Baron Wiesner. His tone was certainly more reserved than Mussolini's but his words were no less positive.

In September 1936, Guido Schmidt was also received by the Emperor. The difference in temperament and character between these two was very noticeable on that occasion. The Emperor took up a strong position against any possible participation by Austria in a plan for the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia by force. Guido Schmidt developed the theory that one opportunity of Legitimism was that it could lead to internal pacification. The July Treaty contained no secret clause against the Restoration. (The Chancellor had given the same assurance to the Emperor during their August interview.) Guido Schmidt put forward the view that Germany's consent and even co-operation might be obtained so long as the movement was directed against the Little Entente. The Emperor would not consider such a possibility.

Guido Schmidt expressed himself as very unhappy about the July Treaty. Against his will he had been labelled "Minister of July 11th" and was now looked upon by Austria and the whole world as a mouthpiece of the Third Reich. And the Treaty was bad—for which he was not responsible. The attitude of Germany and the National-Socialists was very disappointing and was already showing breaches of the obligations undertaken in the Agreement.

After Baron Wiesner's journey to Rome, the chances of Legitimism had increased. A short time afterwards Guido Schmidt went to Berlin for the first time. As a pseudo-democrat the Secretary of State had never had any close dealings with Le-

gitimism. When in Berlin, did he speak of his interview with the Emperor or Baron Wiesner's mission to Rome? It is significant that he was very uncommunicative at the next meeting at which he was present between the Chancellor and the Emperor in January 1937. It was about this time that he had said in conversation that the Legitimists could have carried through the policy of July 11th. Their tragic mistake had been that they had fought it. As opposed to his statement in September 1936 he put forward the Treaty as his work. On having his attention drawn to the contradiction he flushed but said nothing.

* * *

Meanwhile Germany's pressure and the actions of the illegal Austrian Nazis had increased. The Minister of Security, appointed on the advice of Guido Schmidt, tried to force a breach in the Patriotic Front by legal methods. This development, as also Mussolini's positive attitude brought to light by Baron Wiesner's journey to Italy, caused the Chancellor to be more favorably disposed than ever towards a Restoration. In January 1937 he realized that it had almost become a political necessity. In any case, at the back of his mind he had the idea that it would be a good thing to get Germany's agreement. The eventual date for the Restoration was fixed for the autumn of 1937. In the meantime the Chancellor approved the development of Legitimist propaganda.

Berlin must have heard of this proposal. It is not known whether the information came from Guido Schmidt, his friend Counsellor Wolf, or the National-Socialist spies in the Chancellery. In any case, shortly after the meeting between the Chancellor and the Emperor in January 1937, the German Press and propaganda let loose a barrage against a Restoration which became particularly fierce when Schuschnigg in his speech of the 14th February spoke openly in favor of the possibilities of this Restoration. The reaction of Germany to Rome was also strong. The visit to Vienna by Baron von Neurath, the Reich Foreign Minister, which took place from the 22nd to the 24th February, was only arranged owing to the fears in Berlin of being surprised by a Restoration. Von Neurath told the Chan-

cellor that he certainly did not wish to interfere in Austria's domestic affairs, which anyway would be contrary to the spirit of the July Treaty. But a Restoration, at least in its repercussions, was a question which went beyond the Austrian borders. The Reich Government had good reason to believe that such an action might have serious consequences in Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden; this was the only reason for opposing the Restoration and on this account it was not only an opposition by the National-Socialists. Neurath even said that a Restoration might imperil the whole National-Socialist system and lead to a junction of certain parts of Germany with Austria. Berlin could not allow the Austrian Monarchy to become the rallying centre of all the anti-National-Socialist forces in Germany.

The visits to Rome by numerous German statesmen, Goering in particular, had as their obvious purpose the endeavor to persuade Mussolini against the Restoration of a Monarchy in Austria. They gave the assurance that Germany would guarantee Austria's independence in accordance with the July Treaty but only on the condition that the Duce would dissuade Vienna from a Restoration. Thus was established a *status quo* which was finally to lead to the destruction of Austria's independence and sovereignty. To make perfectly certain, Goebbels, the most bitter antagonist to a Restoration, sprung all his mines in Vienna. Suddenly on the 26th February the *Giornale d'Italia* appeared with a sensational article by the official Italian journalist, Gayda, denouncing an Austrian Restoration. This article was taken by Vienna to be a direct interference in Austrian domestic politics. Public opinion, which had never been very favorable to Italy, took the occasion of a football match between Austria and Italy in the Vienna Stadium to give vent to a violent anti-Italian demonstration.

The Italian Foreign Minister, questioned by the Austrian Ambassador on the Gayda article, replied in vague words that the article merely expressed the author's own opinion. But he ignored the fact that the contents of the article had already been sent out by the Stefani Agency and so had achieved particularly wide publicity. At that time Mussolini was again applying pres-

sure on Germany. The Anglo-Italian "gentlemen's agreement" of January 1937 had come to nothing. There were no doubts therefore that Gayda had written his article under instructions from his Government. This was repeated a few weeks later when a second sensational article appeared by Gayda, this time on an ostensibly planned participation by National-Socialists in the Austrian Government. Schuschnigg was very annoyed at the steps being taken by the Italians but he did not deceive himself as to the significance of Gayda's articles in view of the regime governing the Italian Press. He gave up any idea of a Restoration in the near future. The surprisingly encouraging commentaries by the British and French papers, including several of the Left, could not alter his view.

But the opinion of the Legitimists was quite different. They would not allow themselves to be frightened by manifestations of the Axis policy. The more tense the internal situation became, the stronger was the external pressure exerted and the more convinced they grew of the necessity for a Restoration to maintain Austria's independence. There were a few encouraging moments also. For instance, the Trade Unions showed themselves to be more and more disposed to form a common united front under the Legitimist Syndicalist leadership. This had a different significance to the plans made during the time of the *Heimwehr*, either by Fey or Starhemberg, in connection with a Restoration. It was also different to the suggestions made to the Emperor by Guido Schmidt's trusted friends.

One of the Secretary of State's intimate friends gave his view that there was only one way of carrying through a Restoration and that was to make Guido Schmidt Chancellor. In conversation with a man very close to the Emperor, during the spring of 1937, this intimate of Schmidt said: "Guido Schmidt is easy to win over to the Restoration. He need only be offered the Chancellorship and a Barony. . . ."

As has been stated, the feelings of the Trade Unions in December 1937-January 1938 were to be much more seriously considered. Legitimism showed the great interest taken in them

because it knew the value of the working classes in a fight for Austria's freedom.

* * *

Berchtesgaden! After the very optimistic news printed by the Paris Sunday papers on the course taken by the meeting between Hitler and Schuschnigg—some even spoke of a victory by Schuschnigg—the Emperor was to receive disturbing news on Monday which, however, even then did not give the truth in its tragic totality.

But on the next day there arrived a detailed report on Berchtesgaden. The details were more horrifying than the fact itself. The Austrian's pride revolted. What was to be done? First the world must be told what happened without any misrepresentation. The world could not possibly tolerate in silence such an unheard-of violation of a defenseless people. The world would surely rise in indignation when it learned the truth which Schuschnigg and his ministers were trying in their humiliation to hide. Then—those National-Socialist traitors and their disguised helpers would have to be thrown out of the country. The true friends and supporters of Austria's independence must be gathered to unite their last forces for the salvation of their threatened land. With Schuschnigg if he will carry the banner, without him if he lets it fall. Instructions were given to the Legitimist organizations to put forth their greatest efforts, and above all to unite with the working classes. These, at first hesitating and suspicious, followed the slogan: "No more parties—only Austrians." The Legitimist defense, the splendid behavior of the Trade Unions, had their effect. A manifesto presented by the Unions in all factories, in favor of Austria's freedom and independence, received almost a million signatures in forty-eight hours.

Under this pressure, Schuschnigg made his speech of the 24th February. Everyone spontaneously fell in behind him—the Legitimists certainly asking anxiously: "Is this more than a speech this time? Is this the commencement of a liberating action?"

Schuschnigg's speech was read in Paris on the eve of a big

political debate on foreign affairs in the Chamber of Deputies. The effect was extraordinary. Nearly all the speakers, from Left to Right, paid tribute to Austria's will to live. A united front could be seen in favor of that little country which, led by its Chancellor, was prepared to defend its independence to the utmost, to death. A plenipotentiary of Hitler seated in the Press box of the French Chamber was very moved. "I must get back to Berlin as quickly as possible," he said to his friends. "I must warn them this very night. Europe has awakened. We must pull in our horns and lie low for a bit. These damned Jesuits have done their work once again."

There was a sigh of relief, and the situation was thought to have cleared. At least a few months' respite had been gained. During this time the Restoration could be put through, and this would put a stop to the National-Socialist intention to conquer Austria. But the Emperor's partisans and counsellors did not trust the lull. He himself was not deceived by the heroic terms of Schuschnigg's speech. Bad news came from Vienna. Seyss-Inquart's speech in Linz was the National-Socialist's answer to the Chancellor's speech and showed a firm determination to drive matters forward on the road indicated by Berchtesgaden. Other reliable information spoke of the fatigue and resignation of the Chancellor, strangely differing from his public statements. He could not withstand a second shock. For he believed in Hitler's unlimited power and had lost confidence in his own strength.

The Emperor wanted to have a clear view from the tangle of reports and information. As always in critical times, he took the most direct and the shortest way: he wrote to Schuschnigg.

* * *

In his letter, dated the 17th February, the Emperor set out the situation as he saw it. He reminded the Chancellor of his great responsibility to the People, *Deutschtum*, and Christendom. He emphasized that the true Germanism, that which had been the basis of the Holy Roman Empire uniting the German nations, no longer existed in the Third Reich, a prey to artificial novelties and neo-paganism; it existed in Austria alone. Only

in Austria could *Deutschtum* be preserved, and she could be the savior of Germany and prevent Germanism sinking in appalling chaos. The Emperor proposed a political plan to the Chancellor for maintaining Austria's independence, based on other important political measures, both domestic and foreign, for immediate pacification of the working classes. These had shown their patriotism within the last few days. They could not be poisoned by National-Socialism and so could always be relied on to come forward for Austria; to this end the Government must make it possible for them to co-operate actively in the building up of their Fatherland.

The Emperor also reminded the Chancellor that he had never approved the form or the contents of the July Treaty. He predicted fresh National-Socialist threats which would lead to the final extinction of Austria. He expressed his fears that Schuschnigg would not stand up to this fresh pressure and by his resignation would give a free hand to the Nazis. In this case he proposed that whatever the situation might be, Schuschnigg should transfer the power to him, not in the form of a Restoration, which was not feasible at the moment, but so that the Emperor could fill the position of Chancellor in accordance with the Constitution and without any modification in the form of the State. In this quality he would be prepared to defend Austria's independence by every means possible.

This letter was sent to Schuschnigg by the Emperor without mentioning it to any of the Legitimist leaders. Even Baron Wiesner knew nothing about it.

On the 2nd March the Chancellor replied.¹ Starting from the fact that were Austria to provoke a war for the protection of her existence she would be unfaithful to her mission of peace, he developed his policy which he represented as the only possible one. He confessed that he had no intention of making any strong resistance. A Restoration—of which incidentally the Emperor had made no mention—was out of the question. The Austrian Chancellor made no reply to the concrete proposals put

¹ The letter and reply will be found in Appendix VI, pp. 295-303.

forward by the Emperor, as he always avoided anything concrete and only spoke in vague formulae.

* * *

Schuschnigg's reply indicated serious danger. Now the worst fears were confirmed. It would have been folly to expect any saving action from an Austrian Chancellor who in this hour of danger could reply to a strong political program of such importance as the Emperor's merely by such resigned and vague reflections. If such an action were to be made, it would have to be without, or in case of need, against Schuschnigg. Crushing as the letter from Schuschnigg might have been, it had not broken the will to resist. It was decided to act in Austria itself. Diplomatic preparations were, fortunately, well advanced. France's good will was known. Even the leaders of Czechoslovakia, who just at this time were showing the greatest concern regarding Austria's future and had implored Paris not to remain inactive, would not have obstructed the last endeavors to maintain Austria's independence. Influences could also be brought to bear on Yugoslavia to persuade her to refrain from direct action. These influences could also work on the Balkan Entente. They had a special prospect, if things went well, of winning Great Britain to a discreet encouragement. The King of Rumania was no opponent to a Restoration limited to Austria. He was a little disturbed by the German advance in the Danube Basin and also by the National-Socialist propaganda directed against him personally in his own country. When King George of Greece visited the Paris Exhibition he had asked the Yugoslav Minister direct how Yugoslavia would react to an Austrian Restoration. The King had given his opinion that it would be impossible for the Austrian Government to withstand for long the Nazi storm, and that a Monarchy stood a much greater chance. This was months before Berchtesgaden. The Yugoslav Minister explained, it is true, that he did not know whether King George was really disturbed or whether, after the successful Restoration in Greece, he felt obliged to help in the reinstatement of other thrones. He told the King that he did not think that the Restoration question was of any moment because

Austria dared not do anything which might irritate Germany. He added that his personal opinion was that an Austrian Restoration, assuming it could be kept free from German influences, would not be contrary to Yugoslav interests. But if Hitler were to make the best of a bad job and agree to a Monarchy in Austria with the intention of using her as a battering-ram to open the Danubian districts, then this solution would be worse for Yugoslavia than an *Anschluss*. After Berchtesgaden, Yugoslavia could no longer put forward this view. Without doubt a Restoration must appear to everyone as the only anti-National-Socialist solution. A Bismarck policy could not be considered by Hitler now, nor of course by his adversaries.

In Austria the Legitimists, the Christian-Socialists of the old school, the truly anti-National-Socialists and above all the working classes in their legal and illegal organizations, were ready to fight. Then, at the beginning of March, it was to be assumed that Hitler's second blow would immediately follow on his visit to Rome announced for May. So it had to be anticipated. A change of Government in Austria was therefore contemplated for the beginning of May. It was known that the Austrian President, Miklas, has expressed his wish to resign after Berchtesgaden, but it was also known that Schuschnigg himself was very weary of office.

So the possibilities of a new Government had to be envisaged, which could gather round it all activists and the forces and tendencies prepared to resist the Nazi danger, and make them effective in a great Austrian Front.

* * *

Legitimism saw clearly that Schuschnigg's way was the way of catastrophe, but it knew also that this catastrophe would take place if the Legitimist movement were to take a decisive step against the will of the Chancellor. This explains its policy during the last years of Schuschnigg's regime. The Legitimists did all in their power to turn the Chancellor from the path of destruction, and hoped that they would succeed in their endeavors before the catastrophe occurred. In spite of all threats, Germany would probably not have gone on with her policy of

force had Schuschnigg established a Monarchy in time. For then national unity would have been present in Austria, and Germany would not have been able to advance against a united Austria—united except for a very small number of militant National-Socialists. Had Legitimism gone ahead without, or even against the Government, then the Third Reich would have turned this to their own use and stepped in on the pretext of helping the established Government. And then the Austrian governing circles and the whole world would have reproached Legitimism with being unable to await a peaceful development. Thus the Legitimist movement was placed in a dilemma by the Austrian Chancellor's policy. It must have seemed imperatively urgent that Schuschnigg should constantly be pressed for a Restoration, but this was impossible on account of Germany, against whose policy the Restoration would have been a protection. In this truly tragic dilemma the Legitimist movement had to suffer the consequences of a policy against which they had always warned.

So it came about that the "last card" was never played.

XIII

THUS WAS THE END

IN THE EVENING of Tuesday, March 8th, 1938, Chancellor Schuschnigg summoned the members of his Cabinet, including Guido Schmidt and Seyss-Inquart, and informed them that he had decided to hold a plebiscite on the question of Austria's independence so as to demonstrate the people's wishes to the world and to place a limit on internal discussions. He also stated that after the plebiscite on this question he was prepared to submit his own system of government to the judgment of the people. But first of all a form had to be worked out which would not place the existence of the State at stake. So a start would be made only on the question of whether the Austrian people wished to remain free and independent. Schuschnigg did not make himself clear on this 8th March either regarding the formula or the date of this plebiscite. The decision was not yet definite. It was only made in the course of a conversation on Wednesday morning with Burgomaster Schmitz, the former Chancellor, Ender, and the Minister of Justice, Adamovitch. Then only was it decided that Schuschnigg in his speech at Innsbruck that same evening should publicly announce the plebiscite and that it should be fixed for Sunday, March 11th.

Members of the Government camp, even on the 8th March, had put forward the view that the chances would have been much more favorable immediately after Berchtesgaden or after the Chancellor's speech on the 24th February. A lot of ground

had already been lost by National-Socialist penetration. Nevertheless on the whole everyone was optimistic.

"A cleverly-worded question, a quick vote, a well-organized, well-financed Government agitation, and military protection for polling stations are essential conditions," was the formula of a political organizing specialist consulted by the Chancellor.

The question of Germany's attitude naturally arose during the discussions leading to the plebiscite. "Hitler will be furious," said the Chancellor. "He will consider a counterstroke, but I don't think that in the present circumstances he will decide on military action or spur our Nazis to a *putsch*. So far a plebiscite has always taken place at Germany's demand. What a hornet's nest Hitler would bring about his ears were he to try and stop our plebiscite with force! It would be sure proof that he knows how weak National-Socialism really is with us. The only moment of danger will arrive after the voting when the Nazis with some pretext about the figures having been faked in large numbers, will try and correct the results by internal disturbances. But then the world will have heard the opinion of the majority of Austrians, and it won't desert us. The violation would have been too flagrant."

"But," said a Legitimist leader, "the plebiscite will be a defeat for Hitler, and he certainly won't sit down under it in view of internal conditions in the Reich. I think that he will snap his fingers at hornets' nests because he must first think of the security of his own position in Germany. He could lie to the German people and say that he had to invade to protect the National-Socialist majority from electoral terrorism and false figures. Once he had Austria under military control he could run the 'plebiscite' by this means and then turn to the world and say: 'What did I tell you; in their hearts the Austrians were all for me.'" This argument seemed to make a certain impression on the Chancellor.

"We shall have to word our question and our propaganda in such a way that they cannot possibly be taken as an affront to Hitler," he replied after a few moments. "We will link our declaration for a German peace to our declaration for Austria's

independence. It must never appear in propaganda that it is an anti-National-Socialist plebiscite. Perhaps we could arrange that a few protests come from abroad at our ostensible intention to vote on the Berchtesgaden agreement. I have already got the consent of the 'Ultra-Nationals'. Seyss-Inquart will be engaged on our propaganda, which will make it very difficult for those gentlemen in Berlin to intervene."

"International public opinion is not yet sufficiently clear," said the Legitimist. "In any case we have one or two months' breathing space. Perhaps in that time a more favorable opportunity will arise which will evoke a similar or even stronger feeling of patriotism. The most important thing at the moment is to show more firmness towards the National-Socialist policy of penetration. Perhaps the required psychological effect may be attained that way."

"No," replied the Chancellor, "I need the plebiscite, otherwise the position is untenable. Besides I am certain that Italy would not allow a brutal invasion. Perhaps things will look different after Hitler's visit to Rome."

"Then we will go ahead," the other pulled himself together as he spoke. "The great thing is that in the event of an armed disturbance, our weapons must speak. If this happens, as I believe it will, we must face the situation without any sign of weakness."

* * *

The next twenty-four hours made matters look as if the Chancellor were right. The reaction to the announcement of a plebiscite was a storm of excitement amongst the patriots, and general approval by the world. Amongst the National-Socialists, however, indescribable confusion reigned. They were literally helpless. In Berlin silence; in Austria panic. In Seyss-Inquart's entourage three possibilities were discussed:—

- (1) To give instructions to the Austrian National-Socialists to vote "yes", thereby removing all significance from the plebiscite.
- (2) To give instructions to the National-Socialists to abstain

from voting and to terrorize the people so that the numbers voting would be as small as possible.

- (3) To try and stop the plebiscite by terror and to create a situation which would make possible the immediate solution of the Austrian question in favor of National-Socialism.

Seyss-Inquart was in favor of the first suggestion. He certainly asked Berlin what he should do, but, for safety's sake, wrote also to the Austrian Minister Zernatto, General Secretary of the Patriotic Front, stating that he was prepared to speak over the radio on Friday the 11th *in favor of* the plebiscite.

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It was Wednesday evening at Innsbruck that Chancellor Schuschnigg announced the plebiscite. That same morning in Paris, Monsieur Chautemps' Government had resigned. It was practically certain that neither the Prime Minister, Chautemps, nor the Foreign Minister, Delbos, would be members of the next Cabinet. Both these men who during the next few days had to make the most important decisions for France, were nothing more than "acting" in their positions and must have had the secret wish not to have to bear responsibilities which rightly belonged to their successors. The situation was as Hitler had wanted. Just at the moment when he had to stake everything against Austria, France put on a performance of a little Government crisis which would concentrate all her political energies for an indefinite time on her own affairs. Those Austrians in Paris who were feverishly following this last desperate fight in their native country were truly frightened. One of them telephoned to a famous French politician: "I tremble at the thought that France may have no Government, whilst between today and Sunday the most decisive events in history may take place."

* * *

Mussolini had withdrawn to Rocca della Carminate. To urgent telephone calls from Vienna and from the Austrian Embassy, the Foreign Ministry replied that they could not get into touch with the Duce. Had Schuschnigg thought of a visit to

Rocca della Carminate not two years ago he would have remembered Mussolini pointing to the gleaming battery of telephones connecting him with the Palazzo Venezia. "If I come here and Rome says that I cannot be reached, it means that I don't want to be reached," the Duce had said at that time, and had added: "For my Viennese friends I am always to be reached." Now the Viennese "friend" was trying to reach him in vain.

* * *

A council of war was being held in Berchtesgaden. Goebbels, Goering, Ribbentrop, the Generals Keitel, Brauchitsch, and Reichenau, Rudolf Hess and Himmler were all there.

Goering summed up the situation: "*Mein Führer*, action must be taken. The news from Austria leaves no doubt that our partisans are in a bad position. Seyss-Inquart doesn't know what to do. Schuschnigg has done something which is worthy of us. These fellows are beginning to learn from us. They must be shown that we are still the masters. We cannot put up with a defeat. The Austrians think that the voting will be 75 per cent 'Yes'."

Hitler was very angry. "I won't stand for that under any circumstances. What Schuschnigg is suggesting is, in my opinion, a breach of the Treaty. After that impertinent speech of his he has now gone too far. Austria will vote when and how we want. This plebiscite will not take place."

"Is Mussolini behind this?" asked Goebbels.

"I don't think so," said Ribbentrop. "According to the last despatch from Rome, he has gone into the country and refused to speak to the Austrians. Our man in the Austrian Embassy reports that Berger-Waldenegg tried in vain to have a talk with Mussolini. He had to be satisfied with Ciano to whom he made his official report and by whom he was very coldly received." Hitler beamed. "Then everything is going well. Government crisis in France, Mussolini taking up the same attitude as he did with regard to Berchtesgaden. The English certainly won't worry us. London will just watch that France does not show too much zeal." The Führer sprang to his feet. "Gentlemen, no more

bluff this time. You're going to have nice jobs. Dress rehearsal. Get the two iron-clad divisions detailed for Austria prepared for an alarm call at once. Himmler, how are you getting on with the police preparations?"

Himmler also beamed. His small eyes flashed from behind his glasses. "Everything is ready, *mein Führer*, the most important people are already at their posts. I will take command myself; the Austrian Gestapo is ready and can be transferred to Vienna immediately by 'plane."

"Nothing will happen to them with an escort of 300 bombers and 200 fighting 'planes," said Goering with self-satisfaction.

Himmler shot an angry glance at him. "It will still be my fine S.S. who will have to do the main job."

* * *

The movements of troops, reported from the Bavarian-Austrian frontier on the Friday morning, were of quite a different character to the demonstration of the 12th February. This time it was the real thing. A special mobilization was not necessary, the majority of the mechanized units of the Third Reich being always mobilized on the theory of a lightning war. Only the roads had to be cleared for the troops and the necessary transport requisitioned for a certain number of police and S.S. The troops were given the order to march on their objectives.

* * *

The greatest patriotism reigned in Vienna. The Legitimists were first in the field. Their propaganda had ruled the streets since Thursday morning. The last man on Schuschnigg's side had been mobilized. The working people had also been spurred on to action. The leaders of both camps—the Government and the hitherto illegal Socialists—were still discussing, it is true, but the masses had already swept all difficulties away. The Austrian Front was an established fact. The work-people seized the opportunity to display their patriotism and all their will for independence. Burgomaster Schmitz, only a few days previously the man most hated by the Socialists, was cheered to the echo when at a meeting of the Patriotic Front he cried: "If you have to be a Bolshevik to fight for the independence of

Austria, then I'm the first Bolshevik." When National-Socialists dared to show themselves on the streets, they were not chased by Seyss-Inquart's police but by the workpeople and members of patriotic formations.

* * *

Factory delegates thronged the hall of the Workers' House in the Ebendorferstrasse. It was a delegation from the "red" suburb of Florisdorf. They had somewhat stormily demanded to be received by the president, Staud. He was with Schuschnigg, but on being advised by telephone he had returned to his office immediately. To begin with he wore a rather worried expression: "This won't do, boys. Where is the workers' discipline? You mustn't hold a pistol to our heads. Everything will straighten itself out. You can't carry on politics by running about in crowds. So go back quietly to your homes; you won't miss anything." A moment of frozen silence. Then an elderly man rose to his feet: "You see it's this way, Staud. When we called on the Chancellor a few days ago and had to wait in the lobby—the place where Dollfuss was murdered, who certainly was not our friend—I thought to myself, he too died for Austria. Now you're cursing us because we have no discipline and we come to you with all sorts of ultimatums and demands. Do you know what we want? We, too, want to fight for Austria and also to fall if needs be, but we want to do it before it's too late. That's all we want. And then you won't listen to us." Tears came to the eyes of the officials present. President Staud impulsively grasped the old man's hand. And then they discussed what was the best way to set about the problem.

* * *

At the same moment, Chancellor Schuschnigg was seated at his desk awaiting Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau, who had urgently asked for an interview. Before the Chancellor lay the latest despatches from Berlin. The language in the German Press since Thursday evening had been positively wild, and on Friday morning it was, if possible, even worse. "Austria breaks the Treaty" was the *leitmotiv*, which Goebbels had telephoned

to the Ministry of Propaganda immediately after the Berchtesgaden conference.

Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau were visibly embarrassed when a few minutes later they were seated before the Chancellor. Seyss-Inquart was the spokesman, Glaise-Horstenau contenting himself with looking miserable and nodding his head every now and then in approval of his colleague's words.

"Herr Chancellor," Seyss-Inquart began, hesitatingly, "I regret very much to be the bearer of bad news. But it is not we who have brought about this serious situation. The plebiscite which you ordered without our knowledge or approval is most provocative to all the National-minded people. It is so contrary to the Berchtesgaden agreement, as guardians of which we sit in the Government, that we have been forced to look after ourselves. If the plebiscite is not called off by one o'clock this afternoon we shall have to call up the masses of Nationals, the majority of the population, and send them into the streets to protect themselves from the violence offered them. It is unnecessary to stress the consequences of such a defensive action, which will have the full approval of the German Reich."

While Seyss-Inquart was audibly taking breath and his eyes were starting from his head with agitation, the Austrian Chancellor took a firm grip of himself so as not to burst out with rage. He crushed the cigarette he was about to light and then in a hoarse voice began to speak:

"What you have just said does not ring true. You knew all about the plebiscite and you yourself were ready to speak in its favor. I emphatically deny that it is a breach of the agreement. You will never find me breaking faith. The Berchtesgaden agreement confirmed and strengthened our sovereignty. The breach comes from the other side. Of course I know quite well where the instructions came from to speak to me as you have done. I don't envy you the part which, as Austrians, you are playing in this plot." He almost shouted the last words.

Seyss-Inquart flushed. "We are fulfilling the duty imposed on us by the positions we have undertaken in the Government. We are true Austrians. But I did not come here to discuss; I

merely want an answer to my question: Will the plebiscite be cancelled?"

Schuschnigg had become very pale. "I am prepared to discuss the form it shall take. I propose to add a second question to the voting form, a question which will give every Austrian citizen the opportunity to express his opinion of my Government. It is distasteful to me to be voted on myself by means of a plebiscite which concerns the existence of our State, to which both of you have sworn fidelity. I am even disposed to have a second plebiscite for the so-called National opposition, for which they may have complete freedom of propaganda, and one for which we can arrange the wording together. But cancel the plebiscite? Impossible! That would not only mean the capitulation of my Government, to which you belong; it would mean the end of Austria."

"Then matters are to go on unaltered? I would like to remind you that Adolf Hitler is neither prepared nor in a position to abandon the National Austrians. We have not spoken for ourselves only."

"I know, you spoke for Berlin," said the Chancellor bitterly. "All I can ask is: Is an irreparable situation really going to be occasioned?"

"Irreparable only for those who are responsible for this situation. Matters have gone beyond half measures now. You will want to think things over. We will come back for our answer before the time limit has expired."

In the ante-room Seyss-Inquart took another deep breath. "I think we win," he said to the still unhappy-looking Glaise-Horstenaus. "I know my Schuschnigg. As soon as he begins to negotiate, it is not long before he gives way. He left his haughty 'No' face at home this morning. Now all we have got to do is to increase the pressure. I'm going straight off to the German Embassy. Stein and Keppler will be anxious to know how we got on."

* * *

During that morning, the German Ambassador in Paris had called on the Prime Minister designate, M. Léon Blum. It was

stated to be purely a visit of courtesy. Count Welczek had not had an earlier opportunity of conveying his condolences to M. Blum on the death of his wife. What was discussed in the Socialist leader's quiet study on the St. Louis has never been published. But deductions may be drawn from the fact that on Friday morning official news came from Berlin that Germany had begun to close her frontiers to Austria. Once before, in the early summer of 1936, when a German plan for the annexation of Austria appeared to be probable and the Press of the world became anxious, the action was started by the closing of these frontiers—as, indeed, they were when the failure of the Nazi *putsch* of July 25th, 1934, became known. The Third Reich wanted to provide an alibi for itself. The occupation of Austria was to take place under the mask of an internal rising of the "National Opposition." It is supposed, therefore, that Count Welczek told the future Prime Minister that in view of the troubled and revolutionary situation in Austria, the Reich Government would be forced to close all its frontiers.

* * *

After receiving Seyss-Inquart's ultimatum, Schuschnigg remained for a few minutes in deep thought. Then he gave orders that at all costs he must have a telephone conversation with Mussolini. The conversation never took place. Reliable witnesses state that Guido Schmidt prevented it. It is a matter for conjecture whether the situation would have developed differently if Schuschnigg after Berchtesgaden had gone personally to the Duce and told him that he was no longer in a position to uphold Austria's independence by himself. Then, in any case, Mussolini would have been given the opportunity of communicating discreetly with Berlin, threatening to break the Axis. On the 11th March he could only have intervened if he were determined to break it. But it was too late for that. Mussolini was the prisoner of his own policy and all he could do was to think of how he could make the best of a bad job and give historic motives for the abandonment of Austria.

* * *

At noon the patriotic organizations were told of the German ultimatum, but they received instructions to continue as before. The propaganda for the plebiscite went on. The patriotic fever in the streets reached tremendous heights.

* * *

The Austrian Chancellor wrestled with his problem. Should he accept the challenge? On the previous day a friend had found him in a very determined frame of mind when the Chancellor assured him: "I am absolutely prepared to make an armed resistance if needs be, if only to save our honor." Now he was vacillating again. Alarming news of German military preparations came from the frontier. "Impossible," sighed Kurt von Schuschnigg, "the danger is too great, and no help anywhere. The plebiscite will have to be canceled." About two o'clock in the afternoon, the leaders of the National Opposition were informed that the Chancellor, in the interests of internal and external peace, was prepared to cancel the plebiscite.

* * *

At four o'clock Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau brought the second German ultimatum. This time the resignation of the Chancellor was demanded by 5.30 p.m. Their report to Berlin on the first meeting with the Chancellor and the acceptance of the morning ultimatum had created the impression there that everything could be staked on one card and the complete Nazification of Austria achieved. There was no reaction by foreign countries, so the opportunity was favorable. Schuschnigg and Miklas at first refused the second ultimatum. Shortly after four o'clock it was repeated by the Führer's economic adviser, Herr Keppler, who had arrived in Vienna a few days before on a secret mission. Whereas up to the present the appearance had been kept up of a purely domestic Austrian incident, now the German Reich stepped in officially.

* * *

"*C'est le coup du 7 Mars qui recommence*", a foreign diplomat had telegraphed his Government. Europe had realized the seriousness of the situation too late. In Paris, the startling news from Vienna became intermingled with the conferences on

solving the Government crisis. At one moment it was thought that under pressure from the serious foreign news the *union sacrée* would be formed and that a Cabinet formed of all parties under the leadership of a great statesman would be forthcoming. Léon Blum was convinced that such a *union sacrée* would only be acceptable to the extreme Left if it were under his leadership and built up round a kernel of what had hitherto formed the majority of the People's Front. The acting Prime Minister, M. Chautemps, and the acting Foreign Minister, M. Delbos, had one meeting after another with various officials at the Quai d'Orsay. Urgent calls from Vienna were multiplying. Paris had asked London whether a common action should be taken. The answer was in the negative. The French Chargé d'Affaires in Rome asked Count Ciano for an urgent interview with the Duce. "Why?" was the reply. "If it is anything to do with Austria there is no point in it." So it happened that about four o'clock the Quai d'Orsay sent the discouraging message to Vienna that no intervention could be anticipated. But efforts were still being made in London. Vienna had to gain time in some way.

* * *

The hope-destroying message from Paris arrived almost at the same time as the reinforcement of the second ultimatum by German intervention. Once again an urgent cry for help was flashed to London and Paris. Bitterly the Chancellor complained: "Ever since Berchtesgaden I have been expecting an encouraging word from the Western Powers but not once have the British or French Ambassadors brought me anything official from their Governments. I am deserted even in my hour of greatest need. I cannot take the responsibility of spilling blood." Patriotic fervor continued in the streets. The organizations of the Patriotic Front were only being gradually told of the cancellation of the plebiscite.

* * *

"*Mein Führer*, all goes well," announced Rudolf Hess, beaming, the latest telegram from Vienna in his hand. "You can prepare for your journey to Austria—your triumphant journey

to Austria. We shall be masters of the situation tonight. Schuschnigg appears to have made up his mind to clear out." Hitler stood for a moment in silence. "What about Mussolini?" "He's not moving."

* * *

At five o'clock in the evening the Embassy Counsellor, von Stein, and the Military Attaché, General Muff, were announced to Schuschnigg. They renewed the demand for his resignation and the formation of a Cabinet under Seyss-Inquart. The period was extended to 7.30 p.m. Then without further warning a raid on Vienna by German aircraft would take place should the Chancellor have failed to agree. Patriotic efforts in the street were visibly diminishing and the crowd was dwindling. Panic set in. Already a stream of people was flowing towards the station, anxious to save their lives and their personal freedom.

* * *

Another message came from Paris. Another effort would be made with London. Time was to be gained at all costs.

In these circumstances, the Chancellor, the President and their closest colleagues played a very subtle game, the only disadvantage of which was that it was not understood by either the people or the world. At seven o'clock the Federal Chancellor made the speech over the wireless which was generally taken to be the speech of a head of a Government who had already resigned. In actual fact Schuschnigg had not resigned. The second German ultimatum, moreover, was never accepted. The Chancellor had merely made a farewell speech which was intended on the one hand to gain time, and on the other to arouse world opinion. The President had not accepted Schuschnigg's resignation. All he had done was to instruct Seyss-Inquart, the Minister of the Interior and Public Security, to ensure public order. It was entirely in this capacity that Seyss-Inquart made a somewhat astonishing speech over the radio in which he exhorted the people to offer no resistance to the German troops who were marching in. Incidentally, Seyss-Inquart never asked for German troops to be sent to Austria as has been stated by Germany.

* * *

In any case it was no longer necessary for him to do so. For meanwhile internal collapse had taken place in Vienna. Schuschnigg's speech was accepted as the swan-song of independent Austria. At 7.30 the National-Socialist militants began to assemble before the Chancellery.¹ The German S.S. men and Gestapo officials who had been smuggled into Austria took command. The streets were in the hands of the enemy. The panic in the patriotic camp took the worst possible form. The police, no longer under Government control, began to fraternize with their new masters. The Army, for the most part, could still have been relied on. But the Federal Chancellor had refused to use it for a civil war or as a defense against an invading army. So the Government was defenseless against the pressure from the streets.

* * *

At 8.30 p.m. a high official of the Government had telephoned the foreign Embassies asking them to contradict the rumors of Schuschnigg's resignation which had meantime been announced by the news agencies throughout the world. The Government was still in being and master of the situation. But in the meantime, the National-Socialists had taken over many important key positions in Vienna. The Vienna broadcasting station was sending out German military marches and finally even the *Horst Wessel Lied*. Austrians living abroad must have followed with horror the conquest of their Fatherland by the German Army aided by enemies within their own country. The air raid threatened for 7.30 did not take place although the ultimatum had not been accepted. But one transport aeroplane after another landed at Aspern, the Vienna aerodrome. From them stepped

¹ It was Seyss-Inquart himself who had summoned them. Shortly after 6 p. m., following a mysterious telephone call, Seyss-Inquart informed a full meeting of the Cabinet that the Burgomaster of Vienna had armed the workpeople and that in the circumstances there was no point in discussing matters any further. He left the council-room and gave orders for the illegal Nazi formations to assemble before the Chancellery. He returned and told the Cabinet that the Nazis had risen spontaneously and that failing Schuschnigg's immediate resignation there would be civil war followed by German intervention.

streams of Gestapo officials, S.S. leaders, and office personnel who were specialists in terrorist actions. The frontier railway stations were already occupied, whilst in the provinces National-Socialists took over the executive and police posts without any resistance being offered.

* * *

One Government office after another, continually asked for news by foreign countries, became silent. Some officials who remained at their posts to the last begged not to be rung up again, for they were no longer free. One last "*Servus, Kamerad*" came touchingly over the wires.

Then it was the enemy who spoke. "All's well, Heil Hitler!" cried the booming voice of Herr Lengauer, Vice-President of the Trade Union Federation, who had gone over to the National-Socialists a long time ago. He was speaking from the Workers' Chamber in the Ebendorferstrasse which only a few hours before had been the center of patriotic resistance.

* * *

At eleven o'clock there was a last flicker: London had at last yielded to the persistence of the Quai d'Orsay. A combined Franco-British démarche had taken place in Berlin. But it was far from being couched in the terms required by a situation already three parts lost. In any case it arrived too late for Vienna, for at eleven o'clock the Austrian Chancellor had at last decided to appoint Seyss-Inquart in his place. A meeting between Guido Schmidt, Seyss-Inquart, Glaise-Horstenau and Wolf had given the decisive blow. They had persuaded the President that only the immediate establishment of a government friendly to the Nazis could save Austria's independence and prevent a blood-bath, on which the National-Socialists seemed determined. Guido Schmidt had refused to enter this Cabinet as Foreign Minister. He knew that there would soon be no such position. Ministerial Counselor Wolf had the satisfaction of sending the last dispatches from an Austrian Government to foreign countries. The Austrian President had insisted that Skubl should remain Secretary of State for Public Security; in this way the "night of

the long knife" was to be prevented. But nevertheless it was a bad night.

* * *

Till five o'clock on Saturday morning not a single German soldier had crossed the Austrian frontier. Only aeroplanes had flown over Vienna, and National-Socialist fighting and police units were the only ones treading Austrian soil. Himmler and his Gestapo staff arrived at one in the morning. The secret police and a National-Socialist reign of terror were the morning gift by the Third Reich to "liberated Austria." Hitler had hesitated till the early hours of the morning to give the order to march in. He was still waiting to make perfectly certain that no foreign country was going to intervene. But nothing stirred. Not a sign of life from Rome. Paris and London in their feeble *démarche* had been satisfied by making a purely platonic warning.

* * *

At last, at five o'clock, the German army began to move in like a worm. Slowly, carefully and with difficulty the tanks lurched forward like antediluvian monsters and with them the armored cars, tractors and heavy artillery feeling their way through unknown country. There were a few disagreeable surprises. The material failed, breakdowns were frequent. Halt after halt occurred. It is difficult to imagine what would have occurred had they met with armed resistance. Finally complete mechanized units had to be loaded on to trains and travel to Vienna that way.

* * *

But still Hitler hesitated. He did not go to Vienna on Sunday night as announced. He anxiously awaited the answer to a telegram he had sent to Mussolini. At last he received it in Linz. The Duce gave him a free hand. And the Western Powers had shown themselves quite disinterested in the annexation. So the last mask could fall. Reichsminister Meissner, summoned in all haste from Berlin, arrived by aeroplane to draw up the Act of Annexation. He had roughed it out in the aeroplane so that after landing it could be quickly knocked into the shape required

by Austrian law. All decisions would now be made by the Germans and the completed deed only would be placed before the Austrian "Government." Instructions to proclaim the Act of Annexation were given to Seyss-Inquart, who had come to Linz to welcome the Führer of the friendly Reich in the name of "National-Socialist but independent Austria."

* * *

Victory was celebrated in Vienna. In a gay restaurant, a General of the Army of Occupation told a Hungarian neighbor that Hungary must hold herself in readiness, as Czechoslovakia's turn would come shortly. As soon as the Spanish affair was settled, which would be in a few weeks, they only required the time to get the technical material back before they took that next step. Goebbels, when he came to Vienna and was questioned on this point, had different views. He put the order as North Schleswig first, then the Balkans and later on the "Swiss cow."

* * *

In that unhappy night of the 11th March, an icy wind rose about ten o'clock which soon brought a wild snowstorm, although the day had been springlike with brilliant sunshine. It howled its accompaniment to the stormings of a crowd let loose. The Nazi hordes, drunk with victory, had been joined by the underworld of the city. Looting took place. Peaceful citizens peered out into the rage of the elements. Was that rattle caused by gusts of wind on the walls and roofs? Or were they shots?

* * *

The storm swept over Europe. It reached the west and raged over Belgium. There in a castle almost invisible in the night sat a man, alone and serious, listening to the news of Austria coming from the radio. The Emperor was sad but not surprised. He had foreseen this train of events. When he had been told of the plebiscite organized by Schuschnigg, he had said on that Wednesday night: "Hitler will not accept that quietly; we are coming to the climax."

In spite of his doubts of the success of the plebiscite, he gave immediate instructions to the Legitimist organizations to enter the campaign in favor of the idea, with all their might. But he

also had to think of the possibility of the plebiscite receiving a check. The Emperor was determined to enter Austria if a battle took place and if a united front was formed against the penetration of National-Socialism, with or without Schuschnigg. On Friday afternoon he received the news of the first ultimatum. The Emperor was ready to leave by aeroplane for Vienna. Only the fear that Hitler would seize the excuse of his return to hurl troops to the conquest of Austria restrained him. He did not wish to take any steps in this direction before receiving reliable information from Vienna. The Government should have sent it to him. But it had become impossible to keep in touch with the Government since his trusted friends had advised against a sudden return.

The Emperor had been very moved when he heard Schuschnigg's farewell. "*Gott schuetze Oesterreich*" (God protect Austria) a weak and tired voice had said.

The work of a lifetime had collapsed with the man who did not know how to save his country. Schuschnigg had not played the "last card." For him, as for the country he had directed so unhappily, only a martyr's path remained. For the last time the unforgettable strains of Haydn's hymn came from the radio. And shortly afterwards the announcer's voice: "The Federal Minister Seyss-Inquart will now speak." There followed an unpleasant, cold voice. The order for capitulation without resistance. The man speaking did not even seem to have the feeling that *his* hour had arrived. Here spoke the subordinate National-Socialist functionary. A purely administrative speech, awaiting orders from Berlin. The Prussian spirit in Vienna!

Communication with friends in Vienna was now completely cut off. The radio was now giving out gruff shouts. From voices drunk with victory came the *Horst Wessel Lied*. "*Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer*" were the words yelled in chorus, with accents so definitely not Austrian. The enemy were in possession, and Austria was but an occupied country. S.S. formations and the Reich German police were shouting "*Sieg-Heil*" in short, sharp Prussian rhythm. Schuschnigg and his colleagues were no

longer free. The streets invaded by looting crowds, S.A. and Hitler Youth.

The man who alone could have led the battle, who perhaps could have saved the country and certainly her honor, stood in Steenockerzeel. Even now he does not break down. He knows that it is only a new chapter in Austria's history. But that too will be mastered. The Emperor also knows that whilst he is lonely in exile, he is nevertheless not alone. He knows that his name raises hopes in many hearts, prayers rise for him and that between clenched teeth is murmured "*Gott erhalte*"—the first words of the Austrian anthem. He chokes back the tears. This test also must be undergone. A warm feeling sympathy goes out to the unhappy man who must now atone for his last renunciation under the scorn and derision of an unchivalrous conqueror. Poor Schuschnigg!

Austria is occupied by the enemy. But Austria lives. The Emperor thinks of other difficult hours when, too, the capital and the country seemed lost.

* * *

Brooding in "Schutzhaft"¹ in his home in Belvedere, Kurt von Schuschnigg was destined to have yet another surprise. That was when he learned that Guido Schmidt, in contrast naturally to what he had imagined, had not been arrested. He thought sadly of those past days when his "friend" had put forward such convincing arguments that the only way to save Austria was by means of a treaty with the Third Reich. And he remembered also the day when he angrily read the Emperor's disagreement with this Treaty, especially the prophetic phrase: "the Treaty opens the door wide to German intervention and does harm to Austria's reputation before the whole world."

In those days Schuschnigg had been proud of his achievement. Had he not obtained from the Third Reich a solemn recognition of the sovereignty and independence of Austria, and the undertaking not to intervene in Austria's domestic affairs, including the National-Socialist question?

¹ "Protective arrest" in Germany, arrest on the pretext of ensuring someone's safety.

That was the beginning of a policy. The end was the annexation.

Regretfully the prisoner murmured to himself: "The Emperor was right. One does not sign a pact with Hitler."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I ¹

OFFICIAL REPORT

(Conference of 9th July 1936 (evening))

AS THE AUSTRO-GERMAN negotiations are approaching completion within two to four days, it is necessary to prepare and carry through quickly a campaign of propaganda to combat the strong opposition to this development which may be mobilized from within the country or from abroad. The arguments which may be used by this movement are known; they are without foundation, for exactly the contrary is the truth. However, the strictest secrecy must be maintained until the end of the negotiations; premature indiscretions must be avoided.

The principal points which could be used for the Austrian Press, are as follows:—

The Austrian State receives the recognition of its full sovereignty by the Government of the German Reich. This recognition is made by citing a declaration by the German Reich Chancellor made in 1935 in which he stated expressly that the Reich had no intention of intervening in Austria's domestic affairs, and had no thought of either annexation or union.

Each State will declare that it regards the domestic politics of the other as a domain exclusively concerning this other; and in the impending *communiqué* it will be expressly stated that

¹ Appendices I to V are documents relating to the Austro-German Treaty of 11th July 1936 (see Chapters I and II).

the question of Austrian National-Socialism is exclusively a domestic matter for Austria.

In its foreign policy Austria has all along represented a standpoint serving the maintenance of European peace. Austria has never had any ambition to carry out an individualist policy which might have been fundamentally directed against the Reich. On the contrary—as can be seen from the various statements made by the late Chancellor Dollfuss—Austria has always emphasized her position as a German State. Austria's foreign policy will therefore also in the future take account of the fact that she recognizes herself to be a German State, and will proceed in conformity with the foreign political aims of the German Reich, in so far as these have in view the maintenance of peace. Further, it follows, and there is no need specially to mention this, that the Rome Protocols of 1934 and their supplements of 1936 remain fully intact, and that nothing will be changed in the relations of Austria to Italy and Hungary. These declarations of principle will also appear in the official *communiqué*.

The normalization of relations between two neighboring States, which moreover speak the same language, is a natural thing. This normalization places beyond question the sovereignty and independence of Austria, thereby clearing up an issue which has constantly led to uneasiness and lively discussions. Special emphasis is to be given to the fact that not the slightest change has been made not only in a definition, but also in the content of Austria's constitutional position as an authoritarian Christian State, in a word, in form or content as laid down in the Constitution of May 1934. Consequently also there can be no political parties in Austria and the monopoly position of the Patriotic Front as the factor for building up the Political will of the State remains as before. From all this it follows that the revival of the National-Socialist Party does not come in question, and any open or disguised attempts to promote illegal propaganda in this direction will be rigorously and inexorably proceeded against. Hence there is not the slightest change in the attitude of the State, and particularly in the question of how it deals with op-

ponents of the State. It is also perfectly clear that the whole policy of the Austrian State, in all its aspects remains directed to the protection of Austria's sovereignty.

In certain papers, special factors must be given special treatment. For example, discussion of the common cultural policy, which in spite of all historical changes has maintained intact the consciousness of belonging to the same cultural grouping and has led to uninterrupted relations in this sphere. If the *modus vivendi* or the normalization of relations is to reach the desired goal, the mutual cultural connections in the worlds of cinematography, radio, art and the theater, must again be stimulated. Hence also criticism, though naturally always allowed, should be in such a form that it does not damage the other party. In this, recognition of the worth of one's own country and its achievements must remain unquestioned. Criticisms must not contain remarks of an anti-Semitic nature; at most they may be tolerated in papers of the inferior class, and then only on condition that they do not become a regular practice. In this connection mention should be made of the factors of liberty and freedom of movement. From time to time it can also be pointed out that Austria has never wanted to break or loosen the links of history; here special reference might also be made to the times of the Emperor Francis-Joseph, when spiritual relations received a very great impetus. Bismarck's words could be quoted here and there regarding the German student associations of Austria.

In some papers the economic importance of the Treaty should be analyzed. An abnormal situation has hitherto reigned in this sphere. Many economic ties have been broken, in spite of their being based on geographical position and neighborly relations.

A correct understanding, a deeply-rooted popular sentiment, demands a return to normal relations also in the economic field, such as we usually have with other States and are also natural. The handling of frontier traffic and similar matters comes under this heading.

In the treatment of these matters disagreeable allusions and recriminations are naturally undesirable.

Austria's pacific mission forms a special section; here it can

be pointed out that the normalization of relations is a contribution to the maintenance of peace in Europe. One fact is to be specially emphasized: nothing has been changed in fundamental principles; each country conserves its own political conceptions and its view of the world; it does not allow any interference in its own decisions and developments. Events during the last few years have shown how necessary and advantageous is the stabilization of international relations. Austria has always opposed and also defended herself against the injustices of the Peace Treaties.

In spite of this attitude of principle, Austria will remain, as hitherto, loyal to the conception of the League of Nations and will co-operate in every way possible to extend the ideals of the League. The Austrian policy of the future will continue to be carried out on these lines. International circles have always shown great and sometimes extreme anxiety over developments in Central Europe. This anxiety will be calmed by the *modus vivendi* if the desired aim is attained, and a factor making for European strife can be eliminated by the Treaty.

In domestic politics, it has often been said by responsible Austrians that pacification within the State was desired and that no obstacle would be placed in the way of efforts towards it. Today once more the leaders of Austria confirm their point of view that everyone of good will can and should co-operate for this. The same fundamental principle applies in all public affairs, as also do the words spoken on a previous occasion to the former Social-Democrats. This means that it is equally applicable to extreme Nationalist circles. No revenge; the good will is there to heal the still bleeding wounds. In this, however, the interests of the State must not be endangered. There are sure to be some incorrigible elements who will sow hatred and discord and will continue as hitherto; they do not want appeasement for the main reason that it would mean that they would be "fish out of water." These are the elements who have lately tried to disturb the peace of the country by every means possible; in certain circumstances they will endeavor to continue this policy. But in the future they will not be able to reckon on leniency any more

than in the past. If they will reflect, they will soon be convinced that a purely negative extremism can never bring any good results to the community.

If the Federal Government were to carry through a far-reaching amnesty—naturally only in cases where the offense was not against the common law—our opponents would again certainly speak of the weakness of our system. After many years of hard fighting, during which, however, several amnesties have been proclaimed, those responsible could reply that they are not impressed by such arguments from their opponents but that these acts of clemency are a sign of their consolidation and strength and that they are working on the right lines. If circumstances permit we also may follow the path of mercy, and criticism will not prevent this.

All those elements wishing to interest themselves in Austrian politics and prepared to accept responsibilities—great or small—can obviously only do so within the Patriotic Front and under its leaders. In this way, the internal political life will have a single meaning. The Patriotic Front opens its doors to the representatives of various Austrian conceptions; this has already been clearly stated. Here again nothing has been changed. Collaboration is desired within those limits where the interests of the State are not affected.

It may also be mentioned that there will be simultaneous promulgation of the law relating to the security of the State.

In one or other of the monarchist papers, it may be stated that the Treaty is advantageous to the idea of a Restoration in that the form of the State is considered as a purely domestic affair. As regards the liberal-radical Press, it is better not to compel them to approve. Those papers may even write with a certain skepticism: it remains to be seen how it works out. If it is successful, it is the road leading to liberty; if not, it will not be Austria's fault.

Another fact to be expressly emphasized is that this is not a pact with National-Socialism, but that this *modus vivendi* represents a further attempt to strengthen our defensive equipment.

The Secretary of State, Zernatto, and the Cabinet Director,

Guido Schmidt, stated that the question of emblems seemed to be settled, so to speak, on the principle of the most favored nation. The question of insignia was so arranged that only citizens of the Reich might wear them at reunions or in private houses.

As regards the tourist tax of 1,000 Marks, only a gradual effect could be expected, dependent on the abrogation or reduction of the exchange measures taken in Germany; it would be felt first in the tourist traffic of the Alpine Club.

The question of the Legion does not at present arise. The Austrian Government would establish principles which are to be applied in the future.

Finally the mutual authorization of the entry of newspapers was discussed. The number would not be large, and propaganda for the union of Germany and Austria is forbidden in any form whatsoever. The Treaty is not limited as to time.

APPENDIX II

TO THE AUSTRIAN EMBASSIES FOR INFORMATION

(8th July 1936)

Federal Chancellery

Foreign Affairs—Z.40, 118-13.

Austro-German Negotiations

for the resumption of normal relations.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Vienna July 8th 1936

Strictly

Confidential.

Austrian and foreign public opinion has been very exercised for some weeks, as you know, on the question of relations between Austria and Germany. One subject which has been particularly discussed is the negotiations which have been taking place between the Federal Chancellor and the German Ambassador to Austria, Herr von Papen. In view of the lively interest shown in this question by the whole of Europe and the general nervousness on the continent at this moment it is not surprising that numerous rumors on this subject are in circulation, mostly erroneous or at least exaggerated; naturally an official statement of the results of these negotiations is the only way of putting an end to these rumors.

It was useless to take the opinion of the public during the various phases of the conversations, if only in the interests of a satisfactory course for these negotiations and, more particularly, to prevent interested outside influences being brought to bear on them. The conversations which have taken place between the

Federal Chancellor and Herr von Papen have now reached a point where Their Excellencies the Austrian Ambassadors to Foreign Countries—for *their strictly personal information, at least for the present*—should be informed of the efforts being undertaken to bring about an agreement between the two countries.

Austria is endeavoring to obtain the resumption of natural and normal relations between two neighboring States which moreover speak the same language. To achieve this, the following conditions have to be fulfilled: the unequivocal and unquestionable recognition of Austria's independence and autonomy; further, the recognition of the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of the Austrian Federal State, and explicit reference to the fact that the Protocols signed in Rome during 1934 and the supplements of 1936, remain the immutable basis of Austrian politics; and finally, the unequivocal declaration that for Austria National-Socialism does not enter into the question either as a political factor or as the other party to the Treaty.

If these principles be recognized—and there is every reason to believe that they will—the actual resumption of normal relations could just as well have been accomplished in 1933 or 1934; it is known that the repeated efforts made in this direction at that time always failed, because of demands which were necessarily regarded as intervention in Austria's domestic affairs.

Concurrently with the acceptance by Germany of the fundamental conditions detailed above, provision is made for a series of measures to be taken by both sides which should lead to a relaxation of the tension between the two countries. They are special measures, among others, concerning the Press, the radio, the cinema and the theater, the activity of the respective colonies in Germany and Austria, the future settlement of Austrian National-Socialist emigration into Germany, the ending of political handling of economic intercourse by Germany, the gradual return to tourist traffic facilities, etc.

As regards the requirements for action to relieve the internal political tension in Austria itself, it should be mentioned that

the principle of refusing to make any pact with National-Socialism, places a very exact limit in advance on the possibilities in this sphere. Rumors circulating in foreign countries on this subject are purely imaginative.

On the other hand, the political amnesty proposed by the Federal Chancellor is an act which the world will easily understand, since a still wider political amnesty was given to the Social-Democrats at Christmas, 1935, and of course ordinary criminal acts will not be covered.

The basis of the Government can only be strengthened by the fact that the so-called "National circles" will be called upon to take their share of responsibility, in so far as they are in no way compromised with the National-Socialists and further are prepared formally and unequivocally to recognize the principles of the Austrian State expressed by the law which created the Patriotic Front. There is no question of any change in the distribution of portfolios; at the most there might be the addition of one or two ministers to the Cabinet, but without any shuffling of posts now held.

In such action to ensure internal pacification, it must be laid down beyond question from the start that any attitude or propaganda hostile to the State, whether from the National-Socialists or the Marxists, will be repressed as sharply as hitherto.

So that there may be no ambiguity on the subject, a law for the safety of the State will be promulgated during the next few weeks at the same time as the Austro-German Treaty of Friendship. In this connection it should also be expressly stated that any activity against Austrian independence is forbidden as it always has been; thus, for example, propaganda in favor of union with Germany will not be tolerated any more than it was before, as it would be contravening the principles of Austria's sovereignty and the Constitution of May 1934.

From what has been stated above it is clear that any doubt or the slightest suspicion, in this country or abroad, regarding the resolute determination of the Federal Government and the patriotic people to defend and strengthen the independence and liberty of Austria, is entirely without foundation. The resump-

tion of normal relations between the two neighboring States, relations which during the last three and a half years have been at times dangerously tense, will—if, as is hoped, the negotiations now proceeding end in agreement—undoubtedly form a valuable contribution to relieving the tense and unstable general situation in Europe.

You will be advised in good time of the eventual publication of the results of the negotiations in question.

I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's obedient Servant

THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

APPENDIX III

DRAFT OF AN OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUÉ

CONVINCED THAT THEY are making an important contribution towards the general European development for the maintenance of peace, and in the belief that they are thereby best serving the multiform mutual interests of the two German States, the Governments of the German Reich and of the Federal State of Austria have decided to re-establish their relations on a normal and friendly basis.

With these motives it is declared that:

1. In conformity with the declarations by the Führer and by the Federal Chancellor on May 21st, 1935, the Government of the German Reich recognizes the full sovereignty of the Austrian Federal State (and hence its right to order its own affairs).¹

2. Each of the two Governments regards the internal political system existing in the other country, including the question of Austrian National-Socialism, as an internal affair of the other country, on which it will not exercise any influence either directly or indirectly.

3. The Austrian Federal Government will conduct its policy in general, and in particular in relation to the Third Reich, on the fundamental line which corresponds with the fact that Aus-

¹ That part of the clause in parenthesis was in the draft transmitted, but did not figure in the communiqué actually issued.

tria regards herself as a German State. This in no way affects the Rome Protocols of 1934 and their supplements of 1936, nor the position of Austria in relation to the other parties to the Protocols, namely Italy and Hungary.

Since both parties consider that the agreement desired could only be reinforced by certain preliminary conditions being fulfilled, the Government of the Reich and the Federal Government of Austria will take all suitable and necessary means to this end.

APPENDIX IV

REICH GERMAN PROGRAM POINTS FOR THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE IN CONFORMITY WITH § X OF THE TREATY OF JULY 11th, 1936, DETAILED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POINTS OF THE "GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT"¹

ON ARTICLE 1—*Regulation of the Treatment of Reich Germans in Austria.*

- (a) Safeguarding the position of the Reich Germans group in Austria of the N.S.D.A.P.;
- (b) Admission of German Youth in Austria to the demonstrations of the Federation of Reich Germans;
- (c) Return of property belonging to the Economic Association of Students of the Reich in Austria.

ON ARTICLE 2—*Cultural Relations of the two Parties.*

(a) Re-assertion of the recognition of a common German culture, corresponding with the situation existing before the dispute arose;

(b) Confirmation of the provisions accepted in the Protocol of the Austro-German Cultural Commission of the 2nd March,

¹ The English words "Gentleman's Agreement" appear in the original document.

concerning the friendly application of the ban on books, the censorship of films and radio (program on Germany);

(c) Meeting of the sub-committee on books.

(d) Removal of the ban on the circulation of the Führer's book: *Mein Kampf*;

(e) Authorization and protection of representative lectures and of sporting events.

ON ARTICLE 3—*The Press*.

The Press as an essential factor in the Treaty of July 11th.

ON ARTICLE 4—*The Question of Emigrants*.

Amnesty for the Austrian refugees.

ON ARTICLE 5—*Emblems and National Hymns*.

Display of flags at all national celebrations and on special occasions; the wearing of emblems; German greeting.

ON ARTICLE 9—*Domestic Politics*.

(a) Extension of the political amnesty in Austria, abrogation of the exceptional laws;

(b) Drawing in representatives of the hitherto so-called "National Opposition in Austria" to collaborate in political responsibility.

APPENDIX V

THE REGULATION OF THE TREATMENT OF

The Association of
Reich Germans

Reich
Germans

in Austria and of Austrian subjects in Germany, shall be operated in such a way that no obstacle shall be placed in the way of the activities of such institutions in either country. It is understood that they will strictly conform to the lines laid down in their legal statute in accordance with the existing laws of the country and will not intervene in the internal affairs of the other State. It will be forbidden in any circumstances for the subjects of one country to make propaganda intended to influence the subjects of the other.

CULTURAL RELATIONS

All the factors of public opinion in the two countries shall collaborate in such a way as to help to bring about the real resumption of normal relations between the two States. In virtue of both States being members of the German Culture group, both States will at once abandon the aggressive use of radio, film, news and theater against the other. The abrogation of restrictive measures at present in force regarding cultural exchange shall be considered on the basis of complete reciprocity. Every obstacle to the sale of works written by the subjects of one party in the territory of the other shall be removed, naturally

on the pre-condition that the works in question do not contravene the laws of the country.

THE PRESS

Both Austria and the German Reich will instruct the Press of their country to refrain from any political intervention in the affairs of the other. Objective criticism shall be allowed expression only to the extent that it does not offend the public opinion of the other country.

This applies equally to the emigrant Press. A gradual abrogation of the prohibition of entry laid down for newspapers and other printed matter of the other State, is to be arranged as and when possible. The newspapers and publications which will be permitted to enter the territory of the other shall, of course, specially strictly conform to the decisions regarding the limits of criticism.

QUESTION OF EMIGRANTS

Both States desire, by mutual accommodation, to contribute to the solution of question of Austrian National-Socialist emigrants in the German Reich. It is suggested that a mixed commission be set up, composed of representatives of the Ministries concerned, to examine this question.

EMBLEMS AND NATIONAL HYMNS

The citizens of each country will be subject to the same regulations on this question as are applied in the case of citizens of third States. Subjects of both countries shall be permitted to sing their National Hymn on the territory of the other party at private meetings.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The Government of the German Reich is disposed to re-establish normal economic relations with Austria, free from any

political interference. This readiness applies equally to local frontier traffic. Discrimination regarding certain persons and certain territories which do not rest

exclusively on economic motives are not		on exclusive economic motives will not be
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taken into consideration.

PASSENGER TRAFFIC

Restrictions on the subject of passenger traffic, which were imposed consequent on the pre-existing tension, will be abrogated. This abrogation does not affect the laws protecting currency in the two countries. To avoid unpleasant incidents on the resumption of traffic, agreement will probably be reached for progressive maximum quotas, within which relatives, persons traveling on business, invalids and sporting visitors (members of the Alpine Club) will, as hitherto, receive preference.

FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

The Austrian Federal Government is disposed to conduct its foreign policy taking into consideration the peaceful endeavors of the foreign policy of the German Reich.

By these presents, the traditional Austrian foreign policy is only confirmed. Hence obviously emerges the possibility of an exchange of views on foreign policy questions of the moment which are of interest to both countries.

On questions of foreign policy which concern both countries, there will be an exchange of views from time to time.

It is understood that the Rome Protocols of 1934 and their supplements of 1936, and the position of Austria in relation to Italy and Hungary as parties to these Protocols, remain unaltered.

A far-reaching political amnesty shall be carried through in Austria, from which, however, those condemned for serious offenses against the Common Law shall be excluded.

There shall also not be included in this amnesty those persons in course of trial or who have been administratively sentenced for crimes of this nature. This measure shall be applicable also to emigrants.

So as to reach a real appeasement, representatives of National circles shall be called upon to collaborate in political responsibility. This refers only to persons having the personal confidence of the Chancellor, who shall be the sole judge. These representatives will have the duty of ensuring the internal pacification of Austria and the participation of these circles which have hitherto stood aside, in the political reconstruction of Austria (naturally only within the framework of the Patriotic Front).

To provide for cases of difficulties or obstacles arising, a commission shall be appointed composed of representatives of the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Such commission will also have the task of making regular reports on the working of the measures for the establishment of normal relations now provided for, as well as on any requisite supplementary measures.

APPENDIX VI

(CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN OTTO EX-CROWN PRINCE OF AUSTRIA, AND CHANCELLOR SCHUSCHNIGG, REFERRED TO IN CHAPTER XII)

17th February 1938.

DEAR HERR VON SCHUSCHNIGG,

The events of the last few days compel me to write to you.

In this letter I do not wish to speak of things of the past. You certainly know better than anyone else that I have always represented to you the view that we need to make our independence finally secure by the earliest possible introduction of the legitimate monarchy. In spite of your loyal legitimist sentiments, in which I have never doubted and do not doubt even today, you have considered it your duty to postpone this lasting solution of the Austrian problem. You know also that I have never approved the Agreement of 11th July 1936 in form or content. You know finally, that I have always stood for a policy of the most far-reaching reconciliation towards the great mass of the working people, and on the other hand have always condemned a policy of compliance in relation to the national socialist traitors to their people and their country.

With the events of the last few days a new phase in the life of our people has begun.

The enemies of Austria have succeeded, by an act of violence that is without parallel, in forcing your Government into a

perilous position which dangerously impairs our further resistance. They have succeeded in dictating to us a new Agreement which gives full scope to their interventions. A precedent has been created which can only fill every Austrian with the greatest anxiety.

In this hour I must speak—I must speak to you, who today bear such great responsibility for my country before God and the people.

This responsibility is terrible. It is to the people, which believes in you as the champion of the idea of independence and wishes to support you in this policy. It is to the sacred Austrian idea, which, with a strength that is above nations and can unite peoples, held together for centuries a strong, united Danube Basin, and even today has still the power to rebuild it. It is responsibility to the true German idea, which today, as against the alien, neo-pagan tendencies in the Reich, survives in Austria alone in its former strength, which was the fundamental conception of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. Only in Austria can the German idea maintain itself and one day be the saviour of Germany—if all that is German is not to perish in appalling chaos. This responsibility is, finally and above all, to our highest possession, the Catholic faith. In the German Reich a systematic battle against Catholicism is raging, which as it goes on must lead to its extirpation among wide sections of the people. In all the territory inhabited by Germans Austria is today the last position held by Catholicism, with which too our people stands and falls. If this last bulwark collapses, the Church that alone can bring salvation will be laid desolate in Central Europe, and millions of souls for whom eternal salvation is still possible will be lost for all eternity.

This responsibility, however, is not borne by you alone. I too have a share in it. As legitimate heir to a dynasty which protected Austria through 650 years, as the son of my late father, who sacrificed his life on a far-off island for his people, I cannot and must not be untrue to my hereditary obligations.

In full consciousness of all the implications of what I now say to you, and after mature consideration of the great respon-

sibility which I thereby assume, I consider it my duty to lay before you, my dear Herr von Schuschnigg, the following plan to save the Fatherland, now so seriously menaced, for which I, as the legitimate Emperor of Austria, assume responsibility:

The first point of this plan concerns foreign policy. In Austria today we are exposed to the pressure of a powerful neighbor, who wishes to destroy our existence. We must therefore look about us for Powers which can counterbalance this pressure. In this connection the choice can fall only on the Western Powers whose attitude is sympathetic to our Fatherland. It is true that their internal structure does not correspond with our ideal conception, but when the question is "to be or not to be" this cannot be taken into account. This necessary approach to the Western Powers must naturally be kept secret so long as this is possible. For this reason you must take this approach into your own hands, not only because of the confidence of the Western Powers in yourself personally, but also because I can have no confidence in Minister Guido Schmidt. Moreover he is certainly not sympathetic to these Powers, and I know that he has not always been loyal to yourself. Furthermore, his inclinations towards Germany are well known to me. It is therefore an unavoidable necessity that you should take this policy into your own hands, avoiding the official apparatus. You may rest assured that I am ready at all times to help you in this connection. But I know that this is the only way to safety in our foreign policy.

In the military sphere Austria must work for her rearmament with all her strength, and must subordinate all other financial demands, however urgent, to this imperative duty. If we have a strong army, we shall not run such great danger as in the past. From this standpoint I can only congratulate you on the determination with which, in spite of all pressure, you have kept General Zehner. His person is the guarantee to us that the army will continue to remain an Austrian army.

In the questions of home policy, the welfare of the Fatherland requires that you should work in three directions, which is made possible for you through your plenary powers as Leader of the Front. In the first place, reconciliation towards the Left must

be actively pursued. In the last few days the workers have shown that they are patriots. This group cannot be poisoned by National-Socialism, and will consequently always take up its stand most firmly for Austria; while on the other hand the Government must give it the possibility of actively helping in shaping the Fatherland for which it is ready to make a stand. A further force which has not yet been used is Legitimism. This movement—and I undertake to guarantee it—will go through fire with you, if it has the certainty that thereby it is working for the independence of Austria. I beg you to strengthen the movement so far as lies in your power, as every new legitimist is one more safeguard for the independence of the Fatherland. Finally—this I believe it is not necessary for me to stress as far as you are concerned—it will be eminently important to work secretly against the pernicious activities of the Ultra-Nationals from the first moment on.

These, in my view, would be the measures that must be instantly undertaken to save Austria from the peril of Nazification (*Gleichschaltung*). I am convinced that you will agree with me in this.

Now for the future: the decisive moment will come as soon as Germany, with threats and pressure, demands further concessions from us. I believe that I am certainly not wrong in assuming that you hold the same view as I do, that Austria has reached the extreme limit of what it can concede to Germany. Any further retreat would mean the destruction of Austria, the destruction of the laborious work of rebuilding carried out by yourself and Dollfuss. My imperial father would have died in vain, hundreds of thousands would have died in vain, the sacrifices since 1933 would have been made in vain. But we Austrians cannot allow this. Anything rather than lose our Fatherland!

Now I have heard that you, my dear Herr von Schuschnigg, have stated that you could not withstand any new pressure from the German side, and in that event would desire to resign from your responsible position. So now I turn to you, as a man un-

shakably loyal to his Emperor and his people, for the fulfillment of requests which I must urge in my conscience before God:

First: I beg you, so long as you hold the office of Federal Chancellor, to make no new concessions, however they may be wrapped up, to Germany or to the Austrian Ultra-Nationals.

Second: should you have the impression that new German demands or threats against Austria are to be anticipated, I beg you to bring this at once to my knowledge.

Third: however unexpected what follows may seem to you, it has been considered no less carefully in these serious hours of extreme peril: if you consider that you can no longer withstand the pressure from the German or the Ultra-National side, then I beg you, whatever the position may be, to hand over to me the office of Chancellor. I am firmly determined to go to the utmost extremes in defense of the people and the State, and I am convinced that in so doing I shall find a response among the people. In view of the situation, which does not allow of tedious negotiations for recognition by the Powers, I will not for this occasion ask you for the restoration of the monarchy. I would only request you to hand over the Chancellorship to me, so that *without* altering the Constitution, without a new recognition—at least for the decisive situation—the same advantages could be secured as through the formal act of restoration of the monarchy. I should like here once again to emphasize that I alone assume full responsibility for this grave decision, before God, the people, the world and history.

I have felt it my duty to write all this to you in this fateful hour. I am convinced that hereby I am best fulfilling my duty as the son of the Martyr Emperor Karl, as an ardent Austrian patriot, and as the legitimate Emperor of this country. I implore you, my dear Herr von Schuschnigg, remembering the oath you once took as an officer, remembering your great services to the legitimist cause, remembering your selfless patriotic work, to comply with this request of mine. Do not think that this letter springs from a young, ambitious man's hunger for power. Such ambitions—if I had ever known them—would be stilled by the terrible situation and the enormous responsibility. I am acting

in this way only because I regard it as my duty—for when Austria is in peril, the heir to the House of Austria must stand or fall with that country.

The content of this letter of mine is unknown to anyone but myself. I have not even spoke of it in any even indirect way to my trusted envoy von Wiesner. I beg you also on your part not to mention this letter to anyone, and to answer it by letter as soon as possible, letting me have your reply through the same channel.

I assure you once again of my confidence as well as of my determination to help you in every way in these difficult times. May God bless you and direct you to the right path for the welfare and the safety of the Fatherland.

OTTO.

In a foreign land, 17th February 1938.

Vienna, 2nd March 1938.

YOUR MAJESTY,

I acknowledge receipt of the letter of 17th February, which Your Majesty had the goodness to address to me.

I see the state of affairs in the following way:

The supreme duty of the responsible leadership in the State is to maintain the country. Everything which helps towards this is good. Everything which endangers the country is bad and must be considered out of the question. The serious international situation, which may change suddenly, must be taken into account. The fundamental principle which serves as the pillar of Austrian ideology is: Service for Peace. In the moment when Austria, in order to safeguard her existence, is compelled to bring about an international war, she admits that she is unable to remain true to her task.

Moreover, a war can only be waged if, in contrast to the assumptions of the year 1914, there are chances of success. Finally, foreign help must only be reckoned on when it is certain. The geographical and geopolitical position of the country makes peace with Germany essential. Apart from psychological considerations which must be very seriously taken into account, this

view is also supported by matter-of-fact economic needs—which for example, in the period after the 12th of February, brought about a very unambiguous attitude even among very Conservative sections of the peasantry, in the Tyrol and elsewhere. A country can only be maintained in being when an economic minimum of existence is assured to it.

The feeling in the country and the real state of affairs, concerning which, in my humble opinion, Your Majesty has never been correctly or at least not fully informed, compel me towards the same path.

Especially would I regard it as absolutely fatal for the idea of the dynasty if this could buy for itself an ephemeral restoration, or even one which remained in being for a time, only at the cost of much blood and sacrifice and with the help of foreign nations. It is my deepest conviction that this would at the same time seal the fate of Austria.

Therefore even if—which God forbid—a historical reversion comes to pass and Austria has to bow to force, in spite of its long and determined honorable resistance, then it is nevertheless better that this should take place without the dynasty also being drawn in with it. For even in that event the time of resurrection will come, with a complete transformation of Europe; that this, as far as can be seen, could only come about after a new war is an infinitely tragic but unfortunately a probable circumstance.

To plunge the country, nevertheless, into a struggle doomed to failure from the outset, cannot in my opinion be justified under any circumstances. I know what war is, and have also experienced civil war. I know therefore too that it is our duty to do our utmost to save our country from such a situation. Whoever has the future of Austria at heart cannot and must not think of how he can perish with honor, but must concentrate all his energies on how the country can be maintained with honor, so as to be prepared for the better times which must one day come.

I am not in the least pessimistic, but I cannot shut my eyes to all the seriousness and difficulty of the situation. And here I cannot pass over the fact also that a number of legitimist slo-

gans, against which I have for a long time but unfortunately vainly counseled, have greatly contributed to the embitterment of relations between the States without helping the freedom of Austria. Our policy of today is tied to the present; the Austrian idea, including that of the House of Austria, is in my opinion a conception that cannot be measured in terms of a generation. Those ideas must remain, though we individuals and our destinies may perhaps perish for their sake.

This, Your Majesty, is my opinion!

I infinitely regret that I have not succeeded in conveying to Your Majesty my views and convictions, formed from an exact knowledge of the international and home situation, in such a way as to be convincing. I beg you most earnestly to believe me now that infinitely much, perhaps everything, is at stake, and that any attempt at a restoration, either in the next few years or as far ahead as one can now see, must assuredly, with one hundred per cent. certainty, mean the death of Austria.

I need not add that I should be happy if things were otherwise, but I can only beseech Your Majesty to believe me: that is the position.

I am of course gladly willing, within the measure of the possibilities at my disposal, to inform Your Majesty of any eventual changes. Meanwhile I can only say that what happened had to happen and was right. And if it had not happened, then today there would be no responsible Austrian who still had the possibility of reporting on it to Your Majesty. This is especially true also of the 11th July 1936.

I would most earnestly beg Your Majesty to bear in mind that the expediency or otherwise of such fundamental decisions can only be judged on the spot and can hardly be judged from a distance. No one of us has it absolutely within his power to say that he will succeed, in this exceptionally complex and difficult period, in reaching the goal with certainty. But equally, on the other hand, it is absolutely beyond doubt that there is no other politically practicable road for us. Our task can only be to keep the roads open for a future development; for what was now

destroyed would remain lost for any reconstruction within the range of human memory.

Finally I must with all respect call the attention of Your Majesty to the fact that for us all only the legal way of the Constitution is practicable, and that according to this Constitution the dismissal and appointment of the Federal Chancellor is the prerogative of the Federal President.

With the sincere and ardent desire that God may protect Your Majesty and the House of Austria, and in the firm conviction that the cause of Austria, whether with or without reverses, will proceed along the path of new historical significance; finally with the assurance that, in conformity with my obligations, the fight for my country and responsibility for every Austrian remains the sole motive of all my devisions, I remain Your Majesty's humble and respectful servant,

SCHUSCHNIGG.

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